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Music of Henri Dutilleux : a critical survey of the major works.

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The Music of Henri Dutilleux:
A Critical Survey of the Major Works.

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Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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Abstract.

This thesis is a study of the work of the contemporary French composer Henri Dutilleux (born 1916). In the first chapter, I examine a selection of the chamber works he composed during the 1940s and consider the background influences on his early style, which include his formal training at the Paris Conservatoire as well as a cautious but growing interest in the more modern music of some of the leading European composers of the 1930s and 1940s. The chapter ends with analyses of four movements, showing Dutilleux's changing approaches to sonata form throughout these years. The second chapter goes on to examine the two symphonies (1951 and 1959) and considers the relation of the harmonic and motivic language of these works to their overall formal design. In the music of the following decade there is, I suggest, a greater concentration and rigour in the harmonic and thematic material, and in chapter 3 this is discussed in relation to Métaboles (1964) and Tout un monde lointain... (1970). The rest of the thesis is devoted to an examination of Dutilleux's larger scores from the last twenty years: two nocturnal works from the 1970s - Ainsi la nuit (1976) and Timbres, espace, mouvement... (1978) - in chapter 4, and L'arbre des songes (1985), and Mystère de l'instant (1989) in chapter 5, again seeking to elucidate the way that the harmonies, motives and textures interact to create the overall form and character of the music.

The Music of Henri Dutilleux

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Introduction

Henri Dutilleux is generally recognised as one of the most important French composers of the post-war era.¹ His reputation first spread beyond French musical circles to Germany, Holland and the United States in the 1950s, in the wake of performances of his first symphony (1951),² and since then has gradually become established worldwide.³ The catalogue of his mature works is not large, but though he composes slowly he is still continuing to produce new works well into his ninth decade.⁴ Since the first symphony his output has been dominated by orchestral works (with the important exception of his string quartet Ainsi

1 See, for example, Oliver Knussen's comment that Dutilleux 'commands almost universal respect' amongst contemporary composers (BBC Radio 3, 21 June 1992, cited in Potter 1997: 204).

2 Throughout this thesis the date following a work indicates the year in which it was completed.

3 In 1994, for example, he was awarded the prestigious Praemium Imperial by the emperor of Japan. It is also during the 1980s that he has become well known in Britain: an important step in the growth of his reputation here was his invitation as guest composer to the Aldeburgh Festival in 1985.

4 His latest work, The Shadows of Time, was first performed in Boston on 10 October 1997.

la nuit (1976)), but he has defined the composition of the orchestra differently for each work, and his choice of scoring has become increasingly unusual in recent years.⁵

The development of Dutilleux's musical language has been generally smooth and consistent, perhaps unusually so considering the turbulent developments undergone by many other composers during the same years. Nonetheless, in over half a century of composing, the characteristics of Dutilleux's musical language have changed a great deal, and the aim of this thesis is to chart this development and to identify the different phases in which particular aspects of his compositional technique are introduced, rejected or refined. My discussion is organised chronologically, and centres on the detailed analysis of Dutilleux's most important and characteristic works, taking them in five successive stages, corresponding conveniently to five decades from the 1940s to the 1980s.

There has been relatively little serious and extended discussion of Dutilleux's music in print until very recently, surprisingly, considering the very secure

⁵ Mystère de l'instant (1989), which is scored for 24 solo strings, percussion and cimbalom, while The Shadows of Time is scored for full orchestra with three children's voices in unison in its third movement, mémoire des ombres.

place it has both in the recording catalogues and concert programmes of major orchestras around the world. Dutilleux himself has given numerous interviews and written programme notes and essays about his own and other contemporary music. For the most part these remain scattered in different periodicals from the 1940s on, with the exception of his two most extensive interviews, one with Dom Angelico Surchamp published in an edition of the arts periodical Zodiaque devoted entirely to Dutilleux (Surchamp 1983), and the other with Claude Glayman published as a full-length book (Dutilleux 1993). Only one substantial interview, with Roger Nichols, has appeared in English translation (Nichols 1994). In these interviews and essays Dutilleux discusses with eloquence his memories of teachers, performers and other acquaintances, his reaction to different composers and stylistic movements, to the other arts, and to religious and spiritual ideas and the general characteristics of his music. But he is very unwilling to discuss his music analytically or give any detailed, technical account of its construction, believing that music should not require an accompanying verbal explanation or manifesto. In a conversation which I recorded with him in August 1992, my attempts to initiate a more detailed discussion of particular pieces were deftly and politely evaded, for the most part, and Caroline Potter has reported similar

experiences on more than one occasion (Potter 1997: 61, 71).

The writing on Dutilleux's music by other authors includes many pieces which are short and inevitably lacking in detail, such as encyclopaedia entries and newspaper articles; the more extensive studies include three full-length books. Pierrette Mari's monograph, first published in 1973 and updated in 1988, comprises a lengthy biographical section, a discussion of Dutilleux as 'man and creative artist', and a relatively brief account of each of the larger works from the piano sonata (1948) to L'arbre des songes (1985). Daniel Humbert's book (1985) concentrates exclusively on the music, and is able to go into more detail than Mari has space for; it also includes at the end a discussion of the general characteristics of Dutilleux's musical language, in terms of harmony, counterpoint, form, orchestration, and so on.

In terms of analytical discussion, however, both books are disappointing, largely because of the failure of either author to confront the consequences of Dutilleux's increasingly tenuous relationship to the forms and harmonic progressions of nineteenth-century tonality. Both authors attempt to describe the structures and processes of the music in thoroughly traditional terms,

without qualification; when a suitable term cannot be found (which is increasingly often in the later works), they simply name the individual ingredients - the chords in a progression, even the notes in a chord - with the result that their accounts cast little light on how or why these constituent elements might have been combined, or what their function is: that is, they catalogue rather more than they analyse.

The third book has only appeared very recently, and is the first full-length study of Dutilleux in English. More thoroughly researched, and marked by a greater sophistication of expression and of approach than either of its predecessors, Caroline Potter's book (1997) is an all-round view of Dutilleux's life and work, and includes chapters dealing with his biography, his interest in links between literature, music and painting, as well as more abstractly musical matters such as the use of tonal backgrounds, and the relation of Dutilleux's music to that of some of his contemporaries. Although it does not include any sections devoted purely to the analysis of individual works, the paragraphs on individual movements which are woven into the general discussion (particularly in chapter 4) frequently include comments more interpretative and analytical than anything to be found in Mari or Humbert. It is a valuable contribution to the

literature, and it is no criticism to suggest that its all-round approach leaves room for a more detailed analytical discussion of the major works.

As a largely analytical discussion of specific works and movements, the present thesis aims to complement these earlier writings, and to contribute to the study of this composer a technical and detailed critical approach which is, I believe, amply justified by the complexity of the music. Since, as I hope to show in chapter 1, the evolution of Dutilleux's musical language is strongly influenced by the example of earlier twentieth-century composers such as Ravel, Stravinsky and Bartók, it seems important to come to terms with the radical new developments in harmony, rhythm and form that they helped to introduce, developments which render the nineteenth-century concepts based on traditional tonality used by Mari and Humbert unsatisfactory for much twentieth-century music, including Dutilleux's own. I have chosen not to explore the extra-musical interests which Dutilleux and later writers have discussed in connection with his music: these are mentioned only in passing. This is not because I consider them uninteresting, but simply that my aim to analyse a representative selection of major works from across the full chronological range of Dutilleux's career already challenged the confines of a thesis, and it seemed

appropriate to focus rather than diversify my chosen approach. An article about the relation between Dutilleux's music and his interest in Baudelaire and Proust is included with this thesis as supplementary material (Thurlow 1997).

Dutilleux quickly moved away from the simple triadic cadences of his earliest and most harmonically conservative works. Gradually the triads themselves became more and more infrequent in his music, although he claims never to have been an atonal composer, in the sense that he continued to give priority to focal pitches and referential harmonies even in his most chromatic music (see, for example, his comments in Surchamp 1983: 12). Dutilleux's first steps outside the bounds of traditional harmonic practice involved experimenting with different modes: not only diatonic modes, such as dorian and phrygian, but also modes which bring different sets of pitches into play, such as the octatonic mode. At the same time, he began to take an interest in superimposing triads or other chordal formations, sounding together all (or almost all) of the pitches available in a given mode. In combination with the recurrent emphasis on focal pitches, the identification of different pitch collections, frequently diatonic or octatonic, but also of other kinds, proves to be helpful in understanding the structure of many passages, in works as

far apart as the oboe sonata (1947) and L'arbre des songes (1985). Such collections rarely remain static for long, and Dutilleux likes to create a smooth harmonic transition by exploiting ambiguities between partly similar collections. It is also characteristic of Dutilleux's music to divide into different registral layers, whose pitch-content may partly overlap, partly conflict. While my analysis of octatonic writing has benefitted from the writing of Richard Taruskin (such as 1996: I, ch. 4), the way it is blended into other collections or chord-types seems to demonstrate a process akin to van den Toorn's notion of octatonic/diatonic interpenetration, which I have found a useful model (see van den Toorn 1983: 48-60).

Consistency in the intervallic content of harmonies becomes a common characteristic of Dutilleux's music from the 1960s on. It can take the form of whole-tone collections or superimposed perfect fourths or fifths; such harmonies, particularly when they have one 'foreign' pitch added, are a point of contact with the music of Alban Berg. Dave Headlam's categorisation of different types of harmony in Berg's music in terms of interval-cycles has also proved a helpful background to my own analyses (see Headlam 1996: 14-17, 53-7, 60-4). When Dutilleux constructs large chords from two or even three intervals, he can bear a strong resemblance to the harmonic language of his close

contemporary Witold Lutosławski. Steven Stucky's account of Lutosławski's control of the intervallic content of large chords has been a useful model to me here (see Stucky 1981: 113-23).

In each of the five chapters in this study I begin with a general assessment of Dutilleux's musical language at that stage in his career, the development it represents in relation to his previous work, its relation to other composers, before going on to examine individual works and movements in greater detail. Chapter 1 discusses the chamber music that Dutilleux wrote during the 1940s, showing how the traditional forms he would have studied at the Conservatoire are gradually combined with ideas drawn from earlier twentieth-century composers; at the end of the chapter four movements, each drawing in a different way on aspects of sonata-form, are examined in detail. In the following decade Dutilleux's two symphonies mark the attainment of the large forms and individual 'voice' which he had been striving towards in previous works: chapter 2 considers his ambiguous relation towards the traditional concept of the symphony, and examines movements from both works, again showing how conventional formal models, such as passacaglia, variations and sonata form, are reconciled with a post-tonal language influenced by Stravinsky and Bartók, amongst others. Chapter 3 examines the two large-

scale orchestral works of the 1960s, in which Dutilleux abandoned traditional genre-titles and began to subject the instinctive empiricism which had guided his use of harmonic and motivic development to a greater degree of rational organisation. This process continues in the two works from the 1970s examined in chapter 4, which introduce a more dissonant harmonic language together with more extreme and abruptly contrasted textures, as they reflect Dutilleux's response to a nocturnal theme. Both the orchestral works written in the 1980s seem to reveal their composer reworking some of the most characteristic ideas from his earlier works, and they form an apt point at which to round off my analytical survey. At the same time, they are highly contrasted one from the other, and the composer considers Mystère de l'instant (1989) to look as much forward as back.

This survey reveals a musical language which has undergone a smooth but continuous and far-reaching process of change, as Dutilleux assimilated and eventually abandoned the traditional formal structures he had studied in the Conservatoire, and gradually transformed his harmonic language, without ever renouncing the idea of using focal pitches to form clear structural landmarks. He has never engaged significantly with the most radical and avant-garde ideas of his contemporaries, but his music has

developed a very long way since the morceaux de concours of the 1940s, and established Dutilleux as a distinctive and highly respected voice amongst living composers today.

* * *

I would like to thank Henri Dutilleux for his kindness and hospitality when discussing his music with me. I am particularly grateful to Arnold Whittall for his encouragement, detailed guidance, and patience throughout the long years of this project. Silvina Milstein has also been very supportive, as has my wife Susan, who played a vital role.

Chapter 1

An extended apprenticeship:Dutilleux's instrumental chamber music, 1942-50.Introduction

Although Dutilleux was a gifted and conscientious student, and his years at the Paris Conservatoire were highly successful, the music that he wrote in the decade following the completion of his formal musical training is noticeably cautious, both in being confined to modest and traditional genres and in its tentative attitude to modernist ideas. The works of the 1940s delineate an extended apprenticeship, in which Dutilleux tried to bridge the gap between a thorough but largely conventional Conservatoire training and the quite different compositional techniques he encountered as he continued to get to know music of more recent decades. As he absorbed and digested these two conflicting strains of influence, Dutilleux sought to move beyond them both and develop an individual voice; this was to be a long quest, but amongst more derivative music written at this time signs of a greater individuality can be seen to appear.

The music that Dutilleux wrote between his Prix de Rome cantata L'anneau du roi (1938) and his first

symphony, premièred in 1951, falls into four main categories: a number of chamber works for piano, or solo wind instruments with piano; two early and unpublished orchestral works; songs; and incidental music for radio, theatre, and film. A complete survey of all of this music would be beyond the scope of this chapter, whose purpose is to discuss some of the different models and techniques which Dutilleux was engaging with as he began to develop a characteristic musical style of his own. To this end, I have chosen to restrict the discussion to the first category, that of instrumental chamber music. This repertoire offers several advantages: it imposes a degree of consistency in the instrumentation and scale of the works examined, enabling the identification of recurrent features and developments in compositional technique from one piece to another. It also provides a reasonably even spread of works across the decade (the orchestral works date from 1941 and 1942, while the songs are also bunched together in the years 1941-5). In the incidental music, on the other hand, the many external factors determining form and style makes it especially difficult to disentangle necessary but sometimes reluctant compromises and exigencies from more committed artistic decisions.

My discussion of the different compositional techniques and models characteristic of Dutilleux's early

music will therefore draw on the following works: the Sarabande et cortège for bassoon and piano (1942), the sonatina for flute and piano (1943), the piano suite Au gré des ondes (1946), the oboe sonata (1947), the piano sonata (1948) and the Choral, cadence et fugato for trombone and piano (1950).

After a brief indication of some of the chief biographical factors most relevant to Dutilleux's compositional work during these years, I discuss the use of compositional techniques such as would have been taught in the Conservatoire at the time that Dutilleux studied there, with special reference to traditional formal models. Then I examine the ways that these models can be combined with less traditional kinds of harmony and tonality, or post-tonal elements, and the importance that Ravel's music held for Dutilleux in this respect. This part of the chapter ends by considering Dutilleux's cautious experimentation with more modern developments in post-tonal harmony, phrasing and rhythm, and the beginning of his interest in Stravinsky. Finally, selected movements, all related to sonata form, are examined to see the different ways that Dutilleux combines these compositional resources in practice: the four movements selected are the Allegro from the flute sonatina, the Scherzo from the oboe sonata, and the first two movements

of the piano sonata, the work in which Dutilleux first took up the challenge of a more ambitious formal structure, and began to work on the large scale which was to characterise most of his works from then on.

Biographical background

Henri Dutilleux was born in 1916 into an artistic family which took care to nurture his musical talents. His grandfather was Julian Koszul, director of the Roubaix Conservatoire, who had encouraged Albert Roussel to turn to a musical career, and had been a close friend of Gabriel Fauré. The young Dutilleux was sent to the local conservatoire in Douai where he was taught harmony and counterpoint by the director, Victor Gallois. In 1932, aged sixteen, he went to study at the Conservatoire National in Paris, where he encountered a host of distinguished teachers: Jean and Noël Gallon, who taught him harmony, counterpoint and fugue; Maurice Emmanuel, for music-history; Philippe Gaubert for conducting; and Henri Busser for composition. Dutilleux was evidently a gifted student, and a string of prizes in all the main academic categories culminated in his winning the highest official accolade of all, the Grand Prix de Rome in 1938, at the

age of twenty-two.¹

The prize, a four-year stay in the Villa Medici in Rome devoted solely to composing, was clouded from the very beginning by the threatening political atmosphere in the city under Mussolini's fascist regime. Within four months France had declared war and Dutilleux was called back to Paris, which soon fell under the Occupation. During the years that followed he had to pick up what work was available, including giving piano lessons, making arrangements of café music, and occasionally accompanying choruses and soloists at the Opéra (Surchamp 1983: 5). After the Liberation he took on a post as Chef du Service des Illustrations Musicales de la Radiodiffusion Française, which gave him more security, but involved him in a considerable amount of administrative work as well as writing and commissioning incidental music for radio plays (Mari 1973: 47-8). Throughout the years in question, therefore, there were various purely practical obstacles to Dutilleux's concentrating exclusively on the evolution of his musical language. His marriage in 1946 to the pianist Geneviève Joy, however, was both the stimulus to

¹ For Dutilleux's memories of his teachers at the Conservatoire and an account of his student works, see Mari 1973: 21-33 and Potter 1997: 3-5, 28-32.

his writing the piano sonata and also provided the means for him to explore the full resources of unrestricted virtuosity, both in this and later works for piano (Mari 1973: 50-2).

Academic forms

All of the chamber works from this early period adopt a multi-movement form associated not only with traditional genres from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but also with the teaching models of the Conservatoire. The four for solo instrument with piano accompaniment were composed as morceaux de concours for the instrumental examinations (Mari 1973: 41, 53, 58-9; Surchamp 1983: 17; Potter 1997: 38-40), and they either adopt a three-movement sonata plan or form diptychs, contrasting expressive lyrical writing with lively virtuosity, in a pattern apt for test-pieces and exemplified by Fauré's Fantaisie for flute and piano of 1898. This two-part scheme underlies not only the Sarabande et cortège for bassoon and piano (1942) but equally the last of these morceaux de concours, the Choral, cadence et ~~fugale~~ for trombone and piano of 1950. Here the short middle movement serves both as cadenza and transition, but the three-part title also invokes works by Franck such as the Prélude, choral et ~~fugue~~ of 1884, which are themselves explicitly backward-looking in their reworking of Bachian

genres.

It is in the design of the individual movements, however, that the residue of composition-class models can most clearly be seen. Four of the six movements of Au gré des ondes (1946) are in the simplest kind of ternary form, in which the repetition of the first part is simply indicated by the instruction 'da capo',² and there are more ambitious and sophisticated uses of ternary form in the Sarabande from the Sarabande et cortège for bassoon and piano (1942), the finale of the oboe sonata (1947) and the Lied from the piano sonata (1948). The two main outer movements of the Choral, cadence et fugue adopt baroque forms: the Choral is a kind of chorale prelude based on canonic imitation at a variety of intervals. Fugal writing and strict contrapuntal procedures such as canon, inversion, augmentation and diminution occur in many other formal contexts, such as the oboe sonata, where canonic imitation between the piano right hand and the oboe is a recurring feature in all three movements. In a later interview Dutilleux has recalled that his interest in rigorous contrapuntal procedures stems not from

2 The movements in question are Prélude en berceuse, Claquettes, Improvisation and Mouvement perpétuel (nos 1-4).

Schoenberg's serial technique, but from his love of Flemish choral polyphony (Nichols 1991-2; see also Mari 1973: 124), and the opening of the sonata can be seen as a homage to that style, with an austere canon of long-drawn asymmetrical lines in plain but flowing rhythms. In the other two movements of the sonata canonic writing is pursued at a variety of different intervals and synchronisations, but is also integrated into a variety of more typically instrumental textures, less obviously associated with the study of counterpoint (see ex. 1.1).

Ex. 1.1 Canonic writing in the Oboe sonata

(i) Ob. Grave

Sonata for oboe and piano, i, b. 3-8

The first system of the musical score is for measures 3-8. It features three staves: Oboe (top), Piano (middle), and a lower staff (bottom). The Oboe part begins with a long, sustained note marked *pp*. The Piano part begins with a series of eighth notes, marked *pp calme et uniforme*. The lower staff contains a series of eighth notes, some with sharps and flats. A dashed line with the number 8 is at the bottom of the system.

The second system of the musical score continues the canon. It features three staves: Oboe (top), Piano (middle), and a lower staff (bottom). The Oboe part continues with a long, sustained note. The Piano part continues with a series of eighth notes. The lower staff contains a series of eighth notes, some with sharps and flats. A dashed line with the number (8) is at the bottom of the system, followed by the word "etc." at the end of the system.

Ex. 1.1

(ii) Vif

ii, b. 13-17

etc.

(iii)

ii, fig. 9 + 11

8

(iv) Assez allant

iii, fig. 15 - 6

6

6

Variation form occurs only once in these works, in the finale to the piano sonata, but Dutilleux was to return to it in later works. Unlike his use of most other traditional forms, his approach to variation writing was unusually free, even idiosyncratic: he did not try to model the cadential structure of the variations on that of the theme, and indeed the short motivic idea which he uses as a theme hardly provides such a structure. Rather, he saw variations as an opportunity to write a series of more or less self-contained sections contrasted in tempo and metre.³ The freedom of this approach would later prove to be well suited to the network of differently related melodic ideas which characterised his style from the first symphony on, but in the piano sonata the lack of a clear structural model for each variation leads to occasionally unconvincing moments in which small motives are overworked to fill out large sections.

It was perhaps for this reason that sonata form was important to Dutilleux during this time, for within its overall design it offers subsidiary structural models

3 As the composer has suggested, the four large 'variations' are characterised like the four movements of a traditional sonata or symphony, though they all run together into a single continuity, as in, for example, Liszt's sonata in B minor (see Dutilleux's programme note quoted in Roy 1962: 413).

which provide a means of mediating between the short phrases that he typically worked with and the larger forms to which he aspired. Sonata design underlies the structure of the Allegretto from the flute sonatina, the Scherzo from the oboe sonata and the Allegro con moto from the piano sonata. Each of these movements presents two contrasting themes in different harmonic areas (by analogy with the different keys of a traditionally tonal sonata scheme), then proceeds to a shorter middle section in which the harmonic focus is more rapidly shifting, before returning to the opening themes again, with the second idea reworked or transformed. (All these movements are examined in more detail at the end of this chapter.)

Given the strong emphasis on the archetypal opposition of the first and second subjects in pedagogical accounts of sonata form at that time,⁴ it is noteworthy that Dutilleux aims at a more subtle differentiation between them, particularly in the oboe and piano sonatas. One of the fruits of his 'apprenticeship' during these years was to discover that the strong binary opposition of this scheme ran contrary to his instincts as a composer,

4 Vincent d'Indy's Cours de composition musicale, which Dutilleux used as a textbook, makes this characterisation quite clear, and discusses the contrast in terms of 'masculine' and 'feminine' qualities (d'Indy 1912: II, i, 263-5).

and from the first symphony on he eschewed such clearly bithematic movements, preferring a network of partly interrelated themes and derivations. This perception of sonata form as a continuously related unfolding of events, as opposed to a dramatic confrontation of opposites, also enabled him to combine sonata elements with other formal models in quite subtle ways, as he was to do in the Lied from the piano sonata (which will also be considered in more detail later in the chapter).

Clearly, for composers with a more historicist view of their role the whole issue, not only of sonata form but of the tonal hierarchies on which it rests, had become irrelevant by the late 1940s. In his second piano sonata of 1946-8 Pierre Boulez takes an interest in sonata form and other traditional models only in order to 'destroy' them, as he put it (Boulez 1977: 41-22). For Dutilleux, however, the concept of a tonal area remained a valid one (and even when his later work abandoned any further reference to triadic harmony the definition and differentiation of specific harmonic 'areas', with what might be described as constellations of harmony revolving around a focal pitch, remained important for him as a means of articulating form).

The delicate and sometimes equivocal distinction

between first and second subjects shown in these movements goes hand in hand, of course, with the harmonic characterisation of the two themes. In this respect, though his harmonic language is hardly advanced for his time, Dutilleux has definitely moved away from the orthodox tonal harmony that formed the foundation of composition teaching at the Conservatoire, and takes as his starting point the fluid blend of tonal function and more complex sonorities characteristic of French composers around the turn of the century. The piano suite Au gré des ondes shows a clear (and perhaps deliberate) imitation of a range of such composers. Fauré would seem to be the inspiration for the first piece, Prélude en berceuse, for its textural figuration (reminiscent of Clair de lune)⁵ and for the harmonically evasive bass-line at b. 17ff. The alternation of F# and F \sharp is reminiscent of the major/minor ambivalence in the opening of the flute

5 The method followed here for referencing specific points in a score is designed for the reader's convenience. Since most of Dutilleux's music is published with rehearsal figures but no bar numbers, rehearsal numbers are generally used, 'two bars after figure 3' being indicated by 'fig. 3 +2,' for example. Bar numbers are used, however, to indicate bars which fall near the beginning, i.e. well before fig. 1, and also in some of the shorter movements discussed in this first chapter, where the figures are too widely separated to be convenient, and the brevity of the movements make the bar numbers easy to count. Bar numbers are also used in all the solo piano music (where the published scores have no rehearsal numbers).

sonatina (an idea which Dutilleux returns to in the piano sonata); here it is not the third which is raised and lowered but the fifth, in B minor, and this lends the piece a certain harmonic piquancy. But many of the references in this work are so precise and so neatly confined to one particular movement (such as the homage to Vierne and the French tradition of cathedral organists' improvisations in no. 3, or the Baroque pastiche in the manner of Gounod or Saint-Saëns of no. 5) that they suggest a public demonstration of the extent to which Dutilleux had mastered and moved beyond these particular models. In general, it is from later generations of composers that Dutilleux learns most in these years, and while there are inevitably some traces of Debussy's influence (see Potter 1993-4: 121-31) the composer who looms largest over Dutilleux's early music is Ravel.

The influence of Ravel

Roger Nichols has said that 'it is almost impossible to underestimate the strength of the Ravelian imperative' amongst French composers of Dutilleux's generation and background (Nichols 1991-2). The appeal of Ravel's music in this context (and particularly of works such as the sonatina, the piano trio, Le tombeau de Couperin and the G major piano concerto, for example) may be partly accounted

for by its skilful integration of the exotic with traditional craftsmanship: it offers a wealth of unconventional and seductive harmonic ideas, while also showing how such resources might be reconciled with relatively conventional formal models.

Dutilleux's Sarabande et cortège, the earliest of the works discussed here, shows the composer making use of a number of post-tonal harmonic ideas reminiscent of Ravel to enrich the repertoire of chordal and contrapuntal possibilities.⁶ In ex. 1.2i, for example, despite the deliberately 'antique' character of the sarabande rhythms, traditional usage is extended in various ways: chords move strictly in parallel, which not only undermines the concept of good voice-leading but also gives rise to pitches outside the prevailing mode (e.g. the db' and eb'

6 The work as a whole also demonstrates an unusual instance of modelling of style and melodic character on one particular work of Ravel's, the left-hand piano concerto of 1930. Like the present work, Ravel's concerto is built on the unusual juxtaposition of a sarabande and a faster but steady march tempo. Both Ravel's and Dutilleux's sarabandes share the same key (D minor), the dark colouring and low tessitura of the melodies, and even the tendency to displace the bass-notes rhythmically so that they occur during the spaces between the melodic notes in between the main beats, as in b. 12 of the Sarabande. Even the bassoon's initial insistence on c' over the D minor seventh harmony is pre-empted by the main theme of Ravel's sarabande.

(continued on p. 32)

in b. 12); moreover, the chief sonority in this passage is a four-note chord which imposes c#' onto the second-inversion triad of D minor. (Exx. 1.2ii and iii show similar harmonic procedures from Ravel's sonatina.) However, the continuation of the passage treats the whole four-bar phrase in a sequence of descending fifth relations, maintaining the dominant pedal in the bass throughout: that is, although the details are outside the norms of traditional tonality, the overall organisation of the phrases remains easily related to conventional procedures.

6 cont'd.

In the contrasting movements of both works the similarities are even clearer. Like Ravel's march-tempo movement, Dutilleux's cortège strikes an eccentric balance between a relentless marching tread, a rather doleful melody and surprisingly jolly figure in 12/8 rhythm (b. 29). Even the themes appear to be modelled on Ravel's, but their order is reversed, so that what in the Ravel is introduced as a contrasting idea appears at the beginning of Dutilleux's cortège.

These two themes bear a particularly close resemblance: both harp on a flat 'blues'-style note, while the supporting harmonies shift by transpositions of a minor third so that the 'blue' note takes on different functions: sometimes as flat seventh, sometimes as flat third. In the Ravel this theme is introduced by a solo bassoon.

Ex. 1.2 (i) Parallel chords, and
progression by ascending fourths

Sarabande et Cortège b. 12-21

Bsn

p espress.

Pno

etc. ... b. 20

(ii) Parallel triads

Ravel: Sonatina, iii, 139-40

pp

(iii) Progression by
ascending fourths

Ravel: Sonatina, i, 40-6

pp

Another important harmonic trait frequently encountered in Ravel's music, and exemplified by Dutilleux's piece, is the use of modal writing. The opening bars show a characteristic passage of 'white-note' writing, here centred on D, though moving to A in b. 10-11 (after two bars which temporarily introduce Bb (b. 8-9)). (See ex. 1.3, which also shows a white-note phrase whose tonal focus shifts up by a perfect fifth, from Ravel's Ma mère l'oye.)

Ex. 1.3 Modal writing, phrase moving from 'i' to 'v'

Sarabande et Cortège b. 1-12

The musical score for Ex. 1.3 is presented in three systems. The first system shows the initial measures for the Bsn (Bassoon) and Pno (Piano) parts. The Bsn part is in treble clef with a key signature change to one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/4. The Pno part is in bass clef with a key signature change to one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/4. The second system continues the musical phrase, and the third system shows the final measures of the phrase. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines, illustrating the modal writing and the phrase moving from 'i' to 'v'.



These passages use the collection formed by the diatonic major scale, but with different degrees of the scale acting as the tonal centre. Relaxing traditional tonal hierarchies still further, the notes of the collection are sometimes combined until most or all of the seven pitches are sounding together, often by superimposing triads, so that there is no longer a single triadic basis to the harmony. Ex. 1.4 gives examples by Dutilleux (here from the flute sonatina) and Ravel of pandiatonic writing.

Ex. 1.4 Pandiatonic harmonies

(i) Flute


(mp)

8

Pno

pp

(ii) *Assez vif* Ravel: *Le tombeau de Couperin* iv, b.1-8



When triads are superimposed in a pandiatonic passage the mode of each triad - whether it has a major or minor third - is determined by the diatonic collection. The same kind of texture, thickening different contrapuntal strands with triadic parallel motion, can also be used with major or minor thirds, regardless of whether or not they draw on pitches outside the diatonic collection. Like the pandiatonic example shown in ex. 1.4 above, such writing develops idiomatically from using two hands at the piano, and even when Dutilleux later uses this kind of harmony in his orchestral pieces the triads still tend to be organised in two strands, as if enriching a texture whose outlines are conceived according to the simplest of two-part models: melody and bass. Ex. 1.5

gives an example of what I shall refer to as polytriadic harmony, from the final bars of the Choral, cadence et Fugato for trombone and piano (1950).

Ex. 1.5 Superimposed triads

Choral, cadence et Fugato figs 14; 16 + 3 etc.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The top system is for piano (Pno) and trombone (Tbn. omitted), showing a sequence of superimposed triads. The bottom system is for trombone (Tbn.), showing the same sequence of triads. The music is in 4/4 time and features a variety of chords, including triads and dyads. The final 3 bars are marked 'final 3 bars.' and include dynamics 'f' and 'ff'.

An advantage of this method of constructing a sequence of harmonies is that it offers a rich and well-contrasted range of chords, and yet can be easily and audibly related to the simple two-voice progression which underlies it. It also provides a way to focus melodic and bass motion by basing them on a mode, or restricted collection of pitches, while keeping the full range of pitches available in the harmonies themselves. This enables a greater definition between chords, especially at cadential moments, where a strict adherence to a diatonic

or other mode, for example, is unable to offer complex harmonies which are sufficiently well contrasted from each other to make a strongly conclusive cadential progression. Ex. 1.5 above illustrates this clearly: the upper line, in the trombone and the top notes of the piano, takes the opening motive of the fugal subject and alters the intervals slightly so as to bring it into an octatonic mode.⁷ The bass-line is also in this mode, but both lines are enriched by triads foreign to the mode. Dutilleux uses them to articulate a resounding cadence with which to finish the piece.

As this example shows, although Dutilleux was keen to introduce himself to new sonorities and new means of connecting them, he still preferred to integrate them into a quasi-tonal phrase structure, where an initial or closing chord is open to a dual interpretation, both as part of the modal progression and as a landmark in a larger formal scheme modelled on traditional tonal relations such as tonic and dominant. He adopted a similar approach to using non-diatonic collections (i.e. collections based on other kinds of scale or interval-pattern), of which the most important is the octatonic

⁷ Octatonicism is discussed in the following section of this chapter.

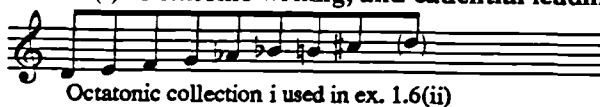
collection, which first appeared in Dutilleux's music in the Cortège.

Octatonicism

Much has been written on the prevalence of the octatonic collection in the music of certain composers from around the turn of the century, particularly in Russia and France (see, for example, van den Toorn 1983; Taruskin 1996; Parks 1988). Messiaen discusses it explicitly in his treatise Technique de mon langage musical (published in Paris in 1942), where he calls it the 'second mode of limited transposition'. The octatonic scale, which is composed of alternate tones and semitones, gives rise to an eight-note collection which includes such traditional sonorities as major and minor triads and minor and diminished seventh-chords, as well as more complex chords outside the range of traditional tonal practice. It is thus open to integration into a quasi-tonal structure in a similar way to the modal writing examined above. The most basic relation in a traditional tonal structure, however, that of triads on roots a perfect fifth apart (such as tonic and dominant, as in the modal passages in ex. 1.3), lies outside the range of the octatonic collection, whose triadic components can only be related by minor thirds. Dutilleux's own use of the collection, both in the Cortège

and in later works of this period, is constrained by his continued reliance on traditional perfect-fifth-based cadences, for which he has to resort to pitches outside the collection. The main theme of the *Cortège*, ex. 1.6ii, provides a typical example; only two pitches here are taken from outside the octatonic collection. The low A's, firstly, sounded together with Bb's in the same extremely low register, function more as onomatopoeic thuds imitating a bass drum, than as a contribution to the harmony. The other non-octatonic pitch, f#, however, plays a telling part in the harmonic argument, enabling the chords where it occurs to act as quasi-dominant harmonies, thus rounding off every two-bar phrase with a quasi-perfect cadence which would have been unavailable using only octatonic pitches.

Ex. 1.6(i) Octatonic writing, and cadential leading notes



(ii) *Bsn Mouvt. de marche* *Cortège, b. 1-8*



This is typical of the role that the collection plays in Dutilleux's music during this period. Octatonic resources (especially triads a minor third apart) are often used as a way of widening the pool of tonic-related harmonies, but usually within a phrase structure which still articulates a traditional function for that tonic, periodically using a non-octatonic leading-note to confirm or reassert the tonic with a (perfect) cadential motion. Another example can be seen in ex. 1.7, where the melody is more richly harmonised with a range of octatonic 'relatives' to the 'tonic' of these bars (though the subdominant in the larger scheme), C. The only two exceptions again serve to clarify the cadences which

resolve back onto C chords on the following downbeat. These are the leading-note b_4 in b. 4, beat 3, and the same leading-note combined in an even stronger cadential gesture with the 'dominant-seventh' f_4 on the last beat of b. 2.

Ex. 1.7(i)

Octatonic collection ii

(ii)

Bsn.

dolce cantabile e legato

Pno

Cortège, b. 13-17

As these examples suggest, octatonic writing is a harmonic resource which Dutilleux preferred to use only intermittently, playing on the potential ambiguity of the triads it generates to move smoothly between octatonic, diatonic and other collections without ever staying long enough in any one of these for its particular harmonic

character to dominate or become static in effect. In later works Dutilleux became more adept at these transitions, as the Aria from the oboe sonata illustrates.

This movement falls into three sections (the opening, fig. 1 and fig. 2 respectively) which are smoothly interlinked. At the beginning of the movement the austere counterpoint avoids triadic sonorities and is woven from two canonic voices (right hand and oboe) in the locrian mode on E over a freely chromatic bass (ex. 1.1i). The transition into the second section is skilfully graded: from b. 10 the piano writing moves from three to four and then five voices which become more homophonic until they form an ascending sequence of chords, and this textural transformation is accompanied by a shift in modes or pitch collections. The first, long canonic phrase ends on its first chromatic note, the raised third g# (bb. 8 and 10), which is then assimilated to produce a new mode. This is the 'acoustic' scale shown in ex. 1.8iv, with raised⁸ raised fourth and flat seventh based on Bb; it permeates the counterpoint as the harmony begins to focus around Bb seventh over an E bass from b. 13, and is outlined as a

⁸ Though less common than the octatonic collection, this 'acoustic' scale can also be found in composers such as Debussy, Ravel and later Bartók (see, for example, Lendvai 1971: 67-88).

rising scale in the piano's 'tenor' voice in b. 14. Against this scale the right hand sounds a db, from outside the collection, which anticipates the change to an octatonic collection in b. 16. The octatonic, and unrooted, ethereal rising harmonies of b. 16-18 then 'resolve' into the deep root-position D major triad at the beginning of the second section (fig. 1, see ex. 1.9).

Ex. 1.8 modes and collections

Ex. 1.9 transition between different modal collections

Oboe sonata, i, fig. 1 -6
(bars 13-19)

The transition into the third section is also carefully contrived, and again the gradual introduction of octatonic elements plays a part. In the third section, from fig. 2, the piano chords are entirely derived from the same octatonic collection as in b. 16-18 (and the oboe is for the most part confined to a single pitch from that mode, f_4 , although its occasional arabesques are more freely chromatic). Octatonic harmony (from a different collection, a semitone higher) is introduced into the right hand of the piano part (i.e. both the leading canonic voice and the chords of the inner part) six bars earlier, at b. 23, but the oboe only joins it at b. 25 and the bass-line only at b. 27-8 when the B-F alternation leads in a strong cadential motion onto the E of b. 29. Although the collection changes at this point, the bass-driven cadence does not break the continuity of the upper voices: the oboe's climactic f''' has been prepared in the right hand's alternation of f''' and d''' throughout the preceding two bars, and these two pitches are then maintained in the first chord of the new section (they are common to both collections) (see ex. (10)).

Ex. 1.10(i)

octatonic scale i
as at b. 16-18, and fig. 2

octatonic scale iii
as at b.23-8 (R.H.)

(ii)

Oboe sonata, i, fig. 2 -6
(bars 23-9)

pp

calme

poco a poco crescendo

poco a poco crescendo

f

fig. 2

This passage also shows Dutilleux beginning to develop a kind of melodic writing in which the contours of the line are continually reworked, so that instead of stating (and later restating) closed, finite themes, as in the *Cortège*, for example, melodies undergo a gradual, quasi-organic change. Here the oboe's repeated $db''-bb'-ab'$ turns to $c\sharp''-bb'-a\flat'$ in b. 18-19 as the piano enters in b. 19 (fig. 1) with a new melody which unwinds from the same figure, altered again into $d\flat'''-bb''-a''$. This kind of motivic transformation becomes highly characteristic of Dutilleux's music, and has been described by the composer as 'croissance progressive' ('progressive growth', see

9

Nichols 1994: 14).

The enriching harmonic vocabularies of pandiatonic, octatonic and 'acoustic scale' collections which Dutilleux developed during the 1940s would no doubt have been suggested by his knowledge of the music of Ravel, whose influence on Dutilleux seems to me to be more powerful than any other during these years, but is unlikely to have derived from Ravel alone. The wide range of composers who explored such ideas earlier in the century has already been mentioned, and it is precisely because Dutilleux's early works draw on such widely used harmonic ideas that they can at times lack individuality, for all their craftsmanship. It is interesting to consider just which parts of the twentieth-century repertoire he knew as he

9 There is an earlier example of this kind of motivic transformation in the second movement of the flute sonatine. Two bars after fig. 7 the flute fixes on a four-note motif e", c", a', db", which represents an idea from the cadenza at figure 5 in more lyrical guise. After a straight repetition the phrase becomes e", c", bb', d4", and then rising up an octave, continues to be transformed:

f''', c#''', bb", d''';
 gb''', eb''', b4''', d''';
 ab''', e4''', c#''', d'''; repeated;
 a4''', f#''', c#''', d'''; repeated;
 bb''', gb''', c#''', d''';

(This developmental process begins in the piano, whose ostinato figure ab', gb', f' in the bar after fig. 7 changes to a4', gb', f' before the melodic interest passes back to the flute.)

wrote these pieces.

More modern influences

In the most extensive and detailed of his published interviews, Mystère et mémoire des sons of 1993, Dutilleux discusses the music that he had access to in his early years in Paris. Although Paris was a lively musical centre, the range may seem a little restricted, and it is important to realise the effect of the Occupation on the performance of new music.

Stravinsky was the subject of keen, if critical, attention, and Dutilleux remembers being taken by Tortelier to a performance of Les noces in the 1930s. It was the early ballets which aroused the most enthusiasm, however, and most later works were labelled as 'neo-classical' and regarded as less impressive (Dutilleux 1993: 42-4, 21). As regards harmonic influence, the octatonicism and pandiatonicism of L'oiseau de feu (1909) and Pétrouchka (1911) may have encouraged Dutilleux to experiment, but it is not really until the symphonies of the following decade that he begins to write harmonies reminiscent of the early Stravinsky.

Perhaps more important were Stravinsky's rhythmic techniques, such as rapidly changing metres, short repeated and altered cells, *ostinati*: these features all

make a decisive appearance in the Scherzo of the oboe sonata. After this, such overtly imitative features become quite rare: the bass ostinato oscillating over the interval of a minor third reappears towards the end of the Allegro moderato from the piano sonata (b. 312), and there is a strongly derivative passage in the Lied, in which static chords are repeated over a dry bass pattern in irregular metres (b. 34-42; see ex. 1.11). The most overtly imitative passages of the Scherzo may have helped Dutilleux to assimilate the impact of Stravinsky's music, for in later works Stravinskian touches, while still detectable, are more thoroughly integrated into their surroundings.

Ex. 1.11 Stravinskian metric changes and bass ostinato

(i) Vif

Oboe sonata, ii, fig. 5

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system is for Piano (Pno) and features a bass ostinato of eighth notes (G2, E2, C2) over a 2/4, 3/8, and 2/4 meter. The piano part includes markings *fp (stacc.)* and *p (stacc.)*. The second system is for Oboe (Ob.) and includes markings *etc.* and *sempre stacc.*. The oboe part shows a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a bass line with a slur and a fermata. The piano part continues with the same bass ostinato pattern.

(ii) *Assez lent* Piano sonata, ii, b. 34-41

pp et sourd
(les basses tres ouatees)

(iii) Stravinsky: Piano Sonata, iii, p. 16, b. 7-15.

In branding Stravinsky's more recent compositions as 'neo-classical', Dutilleux was grouping them together rather casually with the ethos of 'Les Six' and Cocteau's music-theatrical high jinks in the 1920s. He appears to have had little sympathy for this movement either as a young man or since, but is careful to discuss three of the six composers on their own merits (Dutilleux 1993: 22, 41-2). Poulenc comes third on this list, and one of the battles Dutilleux had to fight as a composer during these years may have been to accept that his ability to write

convincing and effective melodies and accompaniments in Poulenc's style (see, for example, the Andante of the flute sonatina and the opening of the finale of the oboe sonata) was standing in the way of his developing more individuality as a composer. Alberti figurations and continuous motor-rhythms also betray this influence throughout Au gré des ondes and occasionally in the first and last movements of the piano sonata, but after that Poulenc appears to have been exorcised from Dutilleux's means of expression, even in his songs (Dutilleux seems to have had most admiration for Poulenc as a songwriter, and wrote his latest song to date, San Francisco Night (1963), in his memory). Milhaud is admired for his bold, innovative gestures, particularly in the field of timbre, rather than for his experiments with polytonality; although Dutilleux claims timbre to be one of his chief preoccupations, in these early chamber works the timbres and textures, though unfailingly apt and effective, rarely draw attention to themselves as they sometimes do in his later work.

Honegger is a composer altogether more important to Dutilleux, and together with Roussel, his dedication to weighty symphonic forms, energetic and contrapuntal development was to remain an inspiration in Dutilleux's own progression towards larger and more ambitious sonatas

and symphonies (see Dutilleux 193: 71-2). Counterpoint is an important element in Dutilleux's harmonies and textures in all the works of this decade, contributing to what the composer has described as the 'tightness of the writing', and he considers that Roussel's example acted as an antidote to Ravel's influence.¹⁰ Many of the most striking harmonic and textural effects in these works occur in passages which are essentially contrapuntal in their conception, such as the austere two-voice counterpoint at the opening of the flute sonatina (which has been described as Roussellian (Nichols 1991-2)). Two long and impressive developmental sections - the central section of the finale of the oboe sonata, and the coda of the Allegro from the piano sonata - represent Dutilleux's response to the symphonic challenge of these two composers, and may be considered amongst the finest passages of his early work.

Prokofiev's symphonic and chamber music set an attractive example to Dutilleux, for it showed that the melodic charm of Poulenc could be harnessed to more ambitious and better integrated formal structures.¹¹ It is

10 'La fermeté de l'écriture' (Surchamp 1983: 18); for Dutilleux's comment about Roussel and Ravel see 1983: 4.

11 For a brief appraisal of Prokofiev by Dutilleux see 1993: 95.

not surprising that the influence took longer to shake off than Poulenc's, and the classical cut of some of Dutilleux's melodies, which can suggest Prokofiev's influence, can still be heard in the third and fourth movements of the first symphony.

Dutilleux began to get to know these composers when he was still a student through unofficial, 'almost secret' study of their scores, very much without the approval or encouragement of the Conservatoire professors (Mari 1973: 39). He still knew scarcely any music by Hindemith or Bartók, and none at all by Schoenberg or his pupils. During the Occupation the performance of new and recent music was severely restricted, and Jewish composers such as Milhaud and Dukas together with other composers regarded as degenerate - including Stravinsky and all the modernists mentioned above - were banned outright. The period following the Liberation was one of great discovery, as many of these composers were brought to light. Although he attended some of Leibowitz's classes on Schoenberg's serial technique, it was to be many more years before he got to know any of the Viennese composers well, and it was Bartók that was for him the most exciting discovery of the post-war years. This was to become a very important influence on the symphonies and later works, but it came too late to have any effect on the

works discussed in the present chapter (Dutilleux 1993: 44, 62, 66; Surchamp 1983: 4).

As the discussions of form, harmony and rhythm earlier in this chapter have aimed to show, the effect of the composers Dutilleux had been able to hear and study can be summarised in terms of three different models. The first is the strict and classical training of his student years, with its legacy of well-defined tonal forms, melodic types and contrapuntal rigour. The second is the harmonically and texturally more inventive and fluid music of early twentieth-century composers such as Fauré, Debussy, Dukas and Ravel: at the Conservatoire these composers may well have seemed to the young Dutilleux enticingly free and even rebellious. But though adopting some of their approaches (chiefly Ravel's) to formal and harmonic thinking helped him to make his first steps away from a purely academic, pastiche-based style, it did not provide him with a means of expression that was either particularly of his time or particularly individual. His continuing search for his own voice led to a gradually more incisive and acerbic realisation of the contrapuntal techniques in which he had been trained, drawing on, or at least drawing him closer to, the example of Roussel. This interest in alternative models - and less overtly 'French' ones - gradually came to include Stravinsky, Honegger,

Prokofiev, and would later extend to Bartók and eventually Berg.

It is important, however, not to view Dutilleux's music at this time as a mere composite of borrowed styles. Speaking of the renaissance of new music concerts and broadcasts after the war, he has said:

The contemporary classics, Stravinsky, Bartók, Schoenberg, Hindemith, Prokofiev reappeared all at the same time, which was certainly enriching but which could also be dangerous. It was both too late, and too much all at once. The risk, for us young musicians, was to take from here and there whatever stood out as the most striking, and to become, in short, eclectic. 12

Clearly Dutilleux was trying to avoid this particular pitfall, and when occasionally eclecticism does appear in his music, as in the passages in the oboe sonata reminiscent of Stravinsky and Poulenc, the ideas are not followed up in subsequent scores. Elsewhere Dutilleux was able to take what he did from these composers, without losing his sense of direction, because of his unwavering concern for formal clarity. If his adherence to academic

12 Les classiques contemporains, Stravinsky, Bartók, Schoenberg, Hindemith, Prokofiev réapparaissaient en même temps, ce qui était, certes, enrichissant mais pouvait aussi présenter un danger. C'était à la fois trop tard et trop à la fois. Le risque, pour les jeunes musiciens que nous étions, était de prendre chez les uns et les autres ce qui se révélait comme le plus marquant, de devenir en somme des compositeurs éclectiques. (Dutilleux 1993: 44).

formal models was perhaps a little too faithful, and makes the stylistic development traced by these works appear somewhat cautious, it nonetheless gave him a firm ground for harmonic and textural exploration.

Of all the forms used in these works it is sonata form which gives the clearest indication of Dutilleux's development through these years, being treated more expansively and adventurously on each reappearance. There is an irony in this, since Dutilleux's first work of really consistent individuality, the first symphony of 1951, makes a deliberate break from sonata form, and in the mature and characteristic works which followed he was never to return to an overtly bithematic sonata design. But before this, the formal model seems to have helped Dutilleux break free of 'the Ravelian imperative' and discover the direction in which his own instincts led, culminating in the piano sonata, by far the composer's most important and ambitious achievement of the 1940s. Once this sense of a personal direction had been clarified, the formal model had served its purpose and could be abandoned in turn.

Case studies

In the preceding parts of this chapter some of the different formal, harmonic and rhythmic characteristics of Dutilleux's early scores have been considered in isolation; the following brief analyses offer some examples of the way these elements are combined. Sonata form is the common element underlying the choice of movements to be examined, which offer a wide variety of scale and structure, and also fulfil different functions in the overall scheme of their respective works. While the flute sonatina and piano sonata both adopt the same traditional arrangement of their three movements - sonata allegro, slow movement, faster finale - in the oboe sonata the first two movements form a continuous span, in which the opening slow movement runs directly into a sonata-form Scherzo which is rounded off by a return to the slow music of the opening movement, before the finale begins afresh with new material. Although the second movement of the piano sonata is not ostensibly a sonata movement, its basic ternary design can be related to certain aspects of sonata structure, giving a foretaste of the flexible and original reinterpretation of formal models which was to characterise Dutilleux's music in the following decades.

Sonatina for flute and piano (1943)

This is the earliest of Dutilleux's works which he still acknowledges as part of his oeuvre, and remains very popular with flautists, record companies, audiences and critics alike (see Dutilleux 1993: 45, 223). Its strengths and limitations are aptly summed up by the critic Jean Roy:

... [T]his incisive work, of rare elegance, already shows the composer in full possession of his technique ... even if Dutilleux has since gone much further in expressing his innermost being ... 13

Allegretto (first movement)

This delicate and elusive movement is notable for the skilful integration of different aspects of its musical argument, in which melodies, harmonies and phrase structure all contribute equally but differently to the delineation of the form. The tonal scheme underlying the elegantly miniaturised sonata structure is relatively traditional, particularly in the organisation of tonal regions for the different sections of the movement. The D

13 The original French and continuation of this quotation are as follows: '... [C]ette oeuvre incisive, d'une rare élégance, montre déjà le musicien en pleine possession de sa technique, et si Dutilleux est allé depuis, beaucoup plus loin dans l'expression de son être intime, on ne peut s'empêcher de saluer en cette Sonatine une réussite non négligeable: la maîtrise du musicien s'y affirme avec bonheur.' (Roy 1962: 410).

minor of the opening theme moves to the relative major F for the second subject (though the cadences at the end of the exposition alternate between V of III (C) and V of i (A), closing finally on E); in the short development section the harmony is more ambiguous and unstable but the tonic returns, initially in the major, at the recapitulation and remains to the end of the movement.

Triadic harmony delineates these tonal areas, and it is a characteristic of the piece that the 'tonic' chord which initially articulates each section is usually given in second inversion. This enables Dutilleux to keep the harmony more fluid and forward-moving, for in effect it deprives the chord of the stability provided by the 'true' bass-note, the root, which is reserved for passages of resolution, where forward motion is a less urgent concern. Both statements of the first theme (b. 1 and 10) and the second theme (b. 19) are given second-inversion harmonies (see ex. 1.12; the opening theme unfolds its harmony through its own melodic contour, sustained by the pianist's pedal (as marked in the score), and then on the second appearance this suggestion of harmony is made more concrete). The cadences at the end of the exposition (bb. 26-9) provide the first instances of root-position triads.

Ex. 1.12

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system consists of three staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The middle and bottom staves have bass clefs. The music is marked *p dolce, legato* and includes the instruction *les deux Ped* (pedal on both hands). The second system also consists of three staves with the same clefs and key signature. It is marked *p (un peu en dehors)*. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

At the beginning of the development section (fig. 3) deep, octave-doubled bass-notes are, for the only time in the movement, sounded at variance with the triadic figurations above them, in a layering of different harmonic implications in different parts of the texture. This contributes to the increased harmonic instability of this section which continues with the bass-line, and the entire texture, rising chromatically to the highest point of the piece, both in register and in terms of harmonic

tension, immediately before the return to the opening melody and the original tonality of D (i.e. the recapitulation, fig. 4).

At this point of large-scale resolution (relatively speaking), the theme begins on a root-position chord, and the first phrase includes two other root-position chords in contrasting harmonies. Yet, far from allowing them to undermine the sense of key Dutilleux seems to use the root-position sonorities here as an indication of harmonic relaxation. When the phrase is repeated two bars later, however, it does not begin from another root position as the preceding phrase did, but repeats the second inversion which was heard one bar earlier, at the harmonically weak halfway-point of the first phrase. In the second, more 'open' phrase, the harmonies then range more widely over the next seven bars, returning to settle finally on the tonic chord (with its root in the flute part) at fig. 5 (see ex. 1.13).

Ex. 1.13

fig. 4 (recapitulation)

pp dolce

p dolce



This tonic chord, like the final combination of sustained flute a''' and staccato bass Ds, is a bare fifth: the only place in the movement where the harmony is left without a third. It is an appropriate resolution, because an important characteristic of the main theme and the chords which accompany it is that they are consistently ambiguous about the major and minor mode, so that the third is sometimes raised, sometimes lowered. In the opening bars, for example, the f₄ of b. 1 is countered with a brief f# followed by a more emphatic f₄ in b. 2. When the flute takes up the theme in b. 10, however, the initial ascent and its accompanying chords are in the major. Three bars before the recapitulation at fig. 4 the piano right-hand part hovers between f# and f₄ repeatedly, leading to a major third when the main theme reappears. In the final bars of the movement the piano's descent evenly balances major and minor thirds, down to the very last notes - F, Gb, D.

Added-sixths provide another component of the triadic harmonies which vary between major and minor, but rather than continually alternating throughout the movement they are used to clarify the sonata structure. For most of the movement the first theme is associated with the minor added-sixth (in the exposition at b. 10ff and in the development section, where it moves into the bass at the third, fifth and seventh bars of fig. 3, and is still present in the flute trill two bars before fig. 4); while the major added-sixth chord is reserved for the second subject (e.g. b. 18ff; also 25-7). In the reprise these are brought together, and the first theme is harmonised with the major added-sixth (b⁴; fig. 4).

One of the problems of the Sarabande et Cortège, written earlier in the same year, is that sometimes the complexity of the harmony sits uneasily in a rather
14
four-square rhythmic structure. The difficulty of matching the flexibility of his harmonic sense in the domains of phrasing and rhythm can also be seen in some

14 Particularly in the Cortège. The use of overtly clichéd gestures, such as heavy marching crotchets and laboured 'oom-cha' accompaniment figures may be ironic, suggesting a dissatisfaction with the easy symmetries of four-bar phrases; nonetheless, there is little indication of whether Dutilleux has yet developed an alternative to these hackneyed figures which could be used without the defence of irony.

later scores, but here in the Allegretto from the sonatina Dutilleux finds a solution which, though simple, is perfectly suited to the equivocation of the melodic and harmonic writing. The pattern into which the unequal pulses of the 7/8 metre fall is frequently alternated, and again there is a distinction between the first and second subject areas: in the first the alternation is bar by bar, but in the second (b. 18-28) four bars of one pattern are followed by four bars of the other.

Every aspect of this evocative piece contributes to its distinctive character, which is sustained without lapses into cliché, or passages in which the influence of one particular composer suddenly predominates. It is the most consistent movement Dutilleux had written up to that time, and for several years to come, and the most direct fruition of the skills and craftsmanship learnt during his long apprenticeship at the Conservatoire; nonetheless, the urge to explore ensured that Dutilleux never tried to repeat its particular success.

Sonata for oboe and piano (1947)

Despite its popularity with oboists (and a crop of recordings, see Dutilleux 1993: 223), this work has enjoyed less critical approval than the flute sonatina, with appreciative comments from Jean Roy balanced by a

less enthusiastic response from Roger Nichols, Caroline Potter and, most outspokenly, the composer himself (Roy 1962: 413; Nichols 1991-2; Potter 1997: 40; Dutilleux 1993: 58-9). The work does become something of a patchwork as it goes on, with parts of the Scherzo reminiscent of Stravinsky and others of Poulenc. The most problematic movement is the finale, a ternary form whose brief outer sections evoke an urbane divertissement in the manner of Poulenc, while the much larger middle section is a long-breathed exploration of sparer harmonies and rigorous contrapuntal combinations in more serious vein; together with the slow opening movement, this section contains the music most indicative of Dutilleux's personal style as it was to emerge in the piano sonata and the first symphony.

Scherzo (second movement)

In contrast to the honed simplicity of the flute sonatina's opening phrases, the opening of this scherzo presents several distinct ideas in quick succession: the opening chords in marching rhythm, the oboe melody in two parts (the rising and falling semiquaver figure in b. 7 and 8, then the more march-like figure in b. 9ff), and the canonic figure in b. 13 (the latter shown in ex. 1.1 on p.

24 above). All of these are drawn from a single octatonic collection (shown in ex. 1.14i), with the harmony focussed particularly on a C# diminished chord up to b. 11, after which the canonic writing is less clearly based on triads. The prevailing 2/4 metre is frequently jolted by single bars in different metres and by syncopated offbeat accents, which, together with the bass ostinato at fig. 5, betray Dutilleux's interest in Stravinsky (see ex. 1.11 on p. 49 above).

At fig. 4 the whole sequence of ideas is reworked. C# is retained as the bass-note, but moves into a different relation to the rest of the pitch collection which shifts to a different octatonic collection (ex. 1.14ii) and is based on the more stable harmony of F# major with an added sixth.¹⁵ In place of the canonic figure a new idea is introduced by the oboe (b. 31) and the octatonic harmony gives way to a whole-tone bass-line for six bars.

15 There is a small number of exceptions to the octatonic pitch derivation of b. 1-18: chromatic passing-notes in the third beats of b. 9 and 10; the sforzando chord in b. 11 which transposes the previous chord up one semitone, and the chromatic run in the last beat of b. 18. In the following passage, from b. 19 to b. 30, there are even fewer: just one passing bass dissonance in each of b. 27 and 28.

Ex. 1.14

Oboe sonata, ii.

b. 1-9

characteristic harmonies

octatonic collection i

fig. 1

fig. 5

ii

At fig. 5 (b. 37) a third statement begins, drawn from collection ii and based on A major added-sixth chords over an E bass, but at b. 48 it switches abruptly into a sustained and lyrical melody in a regular 2/4 metre, which then extends as far as fig. 7 (b. 107). (This is the section which is most reminiscent of Poulenc.) The contrast between these two types of material is that of the first and second subjects in a familiar sonata-form pattern, and this interpretation is corroborated by the brief 'developmental' interlude at fig. 7, followed by a 'recapitulation' at b. 123 (fig. 8 +8) which brings back the opening group and its irregular metres in combination with material from the development. A grand, canonic recapitulation of the second theme ensues at b. 163 (fig. 9 +10), and this is followed, in an imaginative and unexpected touch, by a quiet coda which returns to the theme and tempo of the first movement (c.f. fig. 1). This coda apart, the use of themes can be seen to correspond quite closely and conventionally to a traditional sonata

model.

In its use of tonal areas, however, the movement marks a new step for Dutilleux. Whereas the Sarabande for bassoon and piano moved between the traditional polarities of tonic and dominant, and the Allegretto from the flute sonatina characterised its two subjects with the distinct tonalities of tonic and relative major, this scherzo takes as its basis the symmetrically related tonal centres of the octatonic collection (ii): F# and A together form a 'tonic' area established by the first subject group at figs 4 and 5, and C and Eb serve as the contrasting area¹⁶ occupied by the second subject. In this way the overall tonal scheme is determined by the predominance of octatonic writing in this movement, and even extends to sections which are not themselves octatonic. Despite the clear octatonic alignment of the second subject's tonal centres, the harmony throughout this section derives from a diatonic mode (lydian on C from b. 48-59, after which the minor-third transposition produces lydian on Eb from

16 In this scheme the opening 18 bars, based on a C# diminished harmony drawn from collection i, may be heard to 'lead' into the F# harmony at figure 4, creating an effect loosely analogous to beginning a traditional sonata movement on the dominant seventh. The only other instances of this harmony are in corresponding places in the recapitulation, as discussed in the main text below.

b. 60-88).

Although the melody in this section is at first new (and later proves to be a source for the fugato motif at fig. 7) the oboe's motif from b. 7 can be heard augmented (i.e. in quavers) in the piano (b. 52-3, 58-9, etc.); at b. 60, further augmented (i.e. in crotchets), it is taken up as the main melody in the oboe (still counterpointed by the piano's quaver version at b. 64-5 etc). The E/G bass ostinato beginning at fig. 5 continues to run throughout these bars, shifting up a minor third to G/Bb at b. 60.

In the final bars of the exposition the tonal pattern outlined above is broken by a reference outside the octatonic scheme; this is paralleled by the reference to the Aria and its D major tonality at the end of the movement. Here (b. 99-106, after a transitional passage 89-105) the exposition draws to a close in the unexpected tonal area of Bb major: like D major this key has no place in the octatonic scheme, but it prefigures the key of the third movement. The overlapping melodies of oboe and piano right hand also suggest the texture of the Final's opening theme, while the left hand's rising triads at b. 103ff provide a model for the 5/4 passage starting at b. 16 in the later movement.

The fugato at fig. 7 which serves as the development

section begins in Bb, but soon dissipates the tonal focus. The recapitulation begins, like the exposition, on chords based on C# drawn from octatonic collection i, leading as before to F# major chords in collection ii (at fig. 8). But then this sequence (collection i leading to major chords in collection ii) is repeated around the other tonal centre associated with the first subject, i.e. over an E bass leading to A major chords (b. 138-149). After a brief crescendo passage the second subject follows, in the first subject's tonal area - octatonic collection ii on A (b. 113). Despite the move to D in the coda, the movement closes in this tonic area of A major with an added sixth.

This scherzo shows a completely fresh approach to the basic elements of sonata form after the success of the flute sonatina four years earlier, and one which is also very convincing. The difference in conception can be measured by comparing the second subject in the recapitulation of each movement: in the earlier work it has been 'resolved' out of existence, whereas here it forms the climax of the piece.

The movement is also noteworthy as one of the most extensive and thoroughgoing uses of octatonic writing in Dutilleux's work, and it is a good example of how his concern to enrich his musical language with new techniques

is always balanced by a desire to integrate them into the
17
structure.

Sonata for Piano (1948)

The piano sonata was Dutilleux's largest and most
ambitious work to date, and as the composer himself has
remarked, he felt, and continues to feel, that with it he
18
'took a step forward in his search for large forms'.

The integration of the musical ideas into an expansive and
generally convincing formal design makes this the first of
Dutilleux's works to reveal what is to become a hallmark of
his mature style: his sure sense of long-range harmonic
and textural change. Most critics treat it as the first
work which merits consideration as characteristic of the
mature composer, and Pierrette Mari calls it 'the first
summit' (1973: 52-5, 143; see also Samuel 1962: 331; Roy
1962: 413; Humbert 1985: 41 and Nichols 1991-2).

17 In this respect the scherzo shows a significant
advance on the bassoon Cortège, where the octatonic
writing has an arbitrary relation to the overall tonal
scheme.

18 '[J]'eus l'impression ... d'avoir fait un pas en
avant dans la recherche de la grande forme.' Surchamp
1983: 17.
The work's large scale prompted interviewer Claude
Glazman to suggest to Dutilleux that the work had been
inspired by Dukas' monumental piano sonata of 1899-
1900, which the composer denies (Dutilleux 1993: 65).

Although its grandeur of conception certainly looks forward to the symphonies of the following decade, the prevalence of short, balanced phrases reveals a composer habituated to writing in small and well-ordered forms. Many commentators have pointed out the work's 'classical' aspect, not only in relation to other contemporary works for piano, such as Boulez's second piano sonata (1948),¹⁹ but also in relation to Dutilleux's own subsequent and apparently freer, more flexible style. The composer himself regards this as a defect: 'too classical!' (1993: 64), and occasionally the neat phrases and symmetries can detract from the onward momentum needed to sustain the larger design. In particular, there are occasional passages in the first and last movements where, despite an often sophisticated harmonic palette, a reliance on rather too regular four-bar phrases may be felt to make a slightly banal and short-winded effect: that is, there is a lapse back into the discrepancy between harmonic and rhythmic elements noted in the Sarabande et cortège. Nonetheless, the work is certainly a milestone in Dutilleux's output, and it continues to hold its own in a repertoire (for solo piano) where there is no lack of

19 See Humbert 1985: 41, and Glayman's comment in Dutilleux 1993: 62.

20
competition.

Following on from the two brief analyses above, I shall consider the first two movements of the piano sonata in respect of the way that harmonic, rhythmic melodic and contrapuntal ideas are integrated with an increasingly flexible notion of the elements of sonata form.

Allegro con moto (first movement)

The first movement has the broad outlines of a sonata-form, as well as a dynamism and discursive character which may be felt to signal the opening of a large and serious work rather than the lighter and more lyrical sonata movement of the flute sonatina, for example. The music evolves in a continuous flow, and its evolution is guided by a delicate balance between motivic development, voice-leading and a bass-line. This bass-line is always kept quite distinct in the texture, and at cadential moments it still acts as the foundation of the harmony, defining the root of the prevailing harmonic area. When the bass-line disappears it is often a sign that the tonal focus

20 See Dutilleux 1993: 224; the catalogue of recorded performances continues to grow, and since this list was compiled John Ogdon's recording has been re-released, as well as new performances by Anne Queffelec and Marie-Josèphe Jude.

will become blurred: in this way the question of whether the music is 'rooted' or not is projected in the texture as much as in the pitch combinations themselves.

With regard to the rhythm, Dutilleux returns again to an unvaried flow of quavers such as characterised Au gré des ondes. The comparison immediately shows what greater control and flexibility Dutilleux is now able to achieve within this restriction. The quaver movement occasionally runs over into sudden flurries of semiquavers or triplets, and these may contribute to the fluidity which distinguishes this movement from the rather more mechanical effect of Au gré des ondes. But a more important factor in this is the variety of pulses through which the quavers themselves flow. Not only do 3/2 bars loosen the simple two-minim oscillation of the opening bars, but soon the prevailing minim pulse is itself disturbed by 7/8 bars. The result has an unpredictability which helps the movement to transcend the potential limitations of its style.

Exposition (b. 1-111)

Like both the early sonata movements examined above, this allegro proceeds by a judicious interplay between balanced repetition of clearly defined phrases, and the alteration of such repetitions so as to break up the symmetry and

allow thematic and rhythmic development as well as modulation. The opening pages of the movement illustrate this principle of developing repetition on more than one level, and at the same time show how the bass-line and the variation of pulse mentioned above can contribute to the impression of forward movement.

The piece begins without preamble, with a melodic phrase six bars long, during which the bass-line defines a continuous tonic harmony; the one place where a brief dominant inflection is required (b. 6), so as to re-articulate the tonic in b. 7, marks the first hint of the unequal pulses which will give rise to the 7/8 bars later on (see ex. 1.15). Though the C# bass-note in b. 6 supports a harmonisation which contrasts with the tonic added-sixth harmony sustained through all the previous C#s, this contrast is obscured by the chromatic voice-leading in alto and tenor lines. It is the rhythmic play in this bar which throws the chord more clearly into relief by syncopating it: in this way the fluctuation of the rhythm actually helps to define the cadence as much as the bass pitches themselves. The resulting resolution is a traditional fifth motion, overtly reminiscent of the traditional perfect cadence; Dutilleux uses it to articulate several of the more important repetitions during the first subject group in the

exposition (bars 1-64), but it rarely reappears thereafter.

Ex. 1.15

Allegro con moto

Piano sonata, i, b. 1-13


The musical score for Ex. 1.15 is written for piano and consists of four systems of staves. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The second system continues the melodic line. The third system includes a *poco* marking. The fourth system ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and rests.

This opening phrase falls into two contrasting parts, and the altered repetition of two-part sections can be

seen as an almost ubiquitous formal principle throughout the first subject group, at levels as detailed as the relationship between one bar and the next and as broad as the pattern underlying passages of sixty bars^{or so}. The immediate repetition of the first six-bar phrase leads away from the F# tonality to a less stable 'sub-dominant' area where the bass alternates continually between B and F# (b. 13-32). This section, which is itself constructed from altered repetitions at different levels, finally overflows into a cadenza-like passage in semiquavers and leads back through another quasi-perfect cadence to a restatement of the opening melody in the tonic key at b. 33; this is the beginning of a large-scale restatement of the first 32 bars (with their two sections, tonic b. 1-12 and subdominant b. 13-32) which spans as far as b. 64 and leads to the beginning of the second subject at b. 65. Table 1.1 below summarises the different ways that altered repetition of two-part structures underlies the whole of this first-subject group at different levels.

In bars 44-64 (the second subdominant section) the bass ostinato B-F#, and indeed any sense of bass-line, is abandoned from around b. 50, and this contributes to the dissolution of harmonic focus from b. 51 onwards. This is reflected in the rhythm of this passage, which not only ceases to observe the minim pulse, but gradually abandons

Table 1.1 Altered repetition as a structural principle in the exposition first-subject group (b. 1-64), *Allegro con moto* (piano sonata).

<div>Small scale</div> <div></div> <div>Large scale</div>	1-3; 4-6.* 7-9; 10-12.*	13-15; 15-16.* 17-19; 20-21.	22-23; 24-25. 26-27; 28-32.	33-35; etc. (c.f. 1-12).	44-47; 48-51. 52-56; etc.
	1-6; 7-12.	13-16; 17-21.	22-25; 26-32	33-38; 39-43.	44-51; 52-64.
		13 - 21;	22 - 32.		
	1 - 12;	13-32.	33 - 43;	44 - 64.	
	1 - 32;	33 - 64.			

Explanatory note: '1-32; 33-64.' indicates a first statement in bars 1-32 followed by an altered repetition in bars 33-64. Altered repetition predominates throughout the first subject group, but occasionally a small-scale statement is balanced by a contrasting idea rather than an altered repetition: in these cases the contrasting idea is marked with an asterisk (e.g. 1-3; 4-6.*).

any regular underlying pulse in favour of irregular accents (b. 59-64). This dissolution of previously ordered aspects of the musical discourse throws into relief the arrival of the second subject at b. 65, which sees a return to a four-voice texture bounded at top and

bottom by melody and bass-line, as at the opening of the movement (see ex. 1.16). The melody is new, and conforms to traditions of French sonata style in the rather Franckian hovering around a central pitch which was particularly associated with second subject melodies. The bass, however, resumes the alternation of minim bass-notes which accompanied the first subject, and together with the general similarity of the four-voice texture and inner-part quavers this creates the effect almost of a monothematic sonata exposition, for all that the second melody is actually different from the first.

Ex. 1.16

Piano sonata, i, b. 65-8

f marcato

8...

At first, the second subject proceeds entirely in regular four-bar phrases, repeating the same melodic contour at different pitches. The harmony is initially octatonic, as the bass alternates perfect and diminished fifths in a four-note cycle (A² - D[#] - A[#] - E³) (b. 65-8). In the next four-bar phrase (69-72) triadic chords are reintroduced as a foundation for the harmony, and immediately the octatonic writing begins to loosen. The

e#' which forms part of the 'D# minor' figuration in the first half of each bar may have been chosen for its diatonic inclusion in D# minor, but it is not part of the octatonic collection. In the following phrase (b. 73-6) another non-octatonic pitch is introduced (G#), replacing the tritone bass motion characteristic of octatonic chord relations with a perfect fifth (d#-G#), which is then used to articulate another quasi-perfect cadence (II-V-I) as the harmony moves onto C# in b. 77. This new tonal area (which as 'dominant' is an area traditionally associated with the second subject) is at once clarified by the bass fifth and enriched (or confused) by the chromatic passing motion of the inner voices; in other words, it is established in very much the same terms as the tonic tonality (F# major/minor) was established in the first subject section.

After the transitional harmonies of bars 65-76, the music is only anchored in C# for two more phrases (b. 77-84); like the first subject, the second loses its bass-line and its tonal focus as it rises into the higher registers (from b. 88). Rather than returning to a quasi-cadence of the kind employed earlier in the piece, the confirmation of C# at the end of the exposition is achieved almost entirely through gesture: it is not so much the pitch content of b. 96-99 as the impressive

bravura descent across the entire keyboard which throws the emphasis onto the reiterated C#' of b. 100-102. In the closing bars of the exposition (103-111), the contour of the second-subject melody is dissolved, along with metre, rhythm and texture, until all that remains recognisable from the second subject group is the bass C# itself.

The second subject is thus much briefer in duration than the first (not being subject to a full-scale restatement) and also more tonally restless, more fleeting in its insistence on its own 'tonic' harmony. This shows a completely different approach to the proportions of a sonata exposition from both the oboe sonata, whose second subject was expansive, and the flute sonatina, where it was characterised by greater stability and resolution onto root-position chords than the opening material.

Middle section (b. 112-216)

In the two earlier sonata movements examined above both development sections were dominated by the motivic development of exposition material, thus keeping the movements' main thematic ideas continuously in play from beginning to end and contributing to the unfolding of the whole movement as a single span. The 'development' section of the allegro con moto from the piano sonata,

however, consists of largely new and unrelated material, and serves essentially as an interlude, a contrasting middle section which makes of the whole sonata-movement a large ternary form with a varied reprise.²¹ The melody at b. 112 establishes a new pace and texture (though its texture and pianist's layout still relates to the model of melody/harmonic inner voices/bass-line). Its tonality starts in the C# area in which the exposition ended, and then moves slowly but continuously through a range of harmonies (in this respect it does correspond to some of the traditional characteristics of a traditional development section). There is one clearly articulated point of arrival, two-thirds of the way through, at b. 182 (ff, pesant). The way it is articulated is reminiscent of the pattern used three times in the exposition: the preceding material is intensified by developing it motivically and ascending in register, before a climactic descent into the new section. In this case, however (175-181), bass-line, harmony and clear metric definition are maintained throughout.

The new section continues to develop the same melody,

21 According to Charles Rosen this is a typical twentieth-century interpretation of the form (Rosen 1988: 403).

over an emphatically repeated bass B'. As in the first subject group of the exposition, the harmonies and arpeggiations built on the bass B' (the 'subdominant' area) use F \flat rather than F# as the fifth (and for the first eight bars both bass and melody are confined exclusively to notes of the diminished seventh chord). Whereas it was the relative tonal instability of this 'subdominant' region which coincided with the disruption of the 2/2 minim pulse in the exposition, here, while the 2/2 metre continues throughout, the four-bar phrases which had played such an important part in the exposition are replaced by phrases which are insistently articulated in groups of three bars. When the bass finally shifts to a new pitch (b. 193) a diminuendo begins and an inner voice in running quavers reminiscent of the exposition textures is introduced (b. 195). This marks a retransition to the opening material in preparation for the 'recapitulation' at b. 217.

As in the final bars of the exposition (103-111), there is a dissolution of energy and focus which sets the ensuing section into relief; the means by which dissolution is achieved here (at the end of the middle section, b. 205-216) are exactly the opposite. Now a continual flow of quavers is maintained almost throughout (contrast the improvisatory lack of rhythm and metre in

the earlier passage), the lines are drawn together until the whole texture is reduced to a narrow band b-a' (unlike the widely dispersed fragments before), and the bass-line is abandoned (c.f. the reiterated C#'s). The emphasis on contrast with the exposition rather than on continuity with it in this middle section shows Dutilleux's understanding that the larger proportions of this movement require stronger and bolder outlines for its form to remain intelligible.

Recapitulation (b. 217-end)

The recapitulation is highly economical in its presentation of the opening material, omitting the repetition of the first subject group and passing directly from the semiquaver descent at the end of its first statement (b. 243; c.f. 28-33) to the second subject, jumping in at what had been the fifth bar (b. 247; c.f. 69). This has been transposed up a perfect fourth so that the tonality at which it arrives eight bars later is now the 'tonic' F#, in true textbook fashion (b. 255). Eight more bars complete this very succinct review of the melodies and tonalities of the exposition.

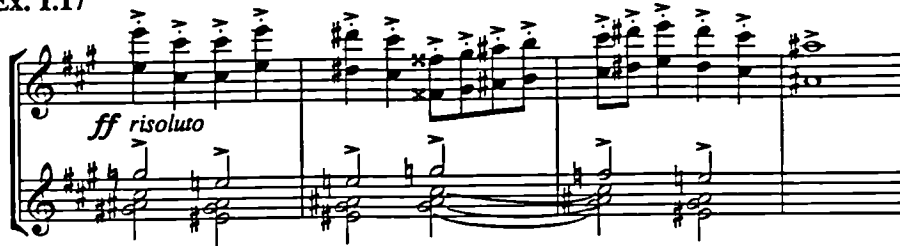
At the parallel point in the exposition (b. 85ff) the second subject was intensified and pushed higher in register in the third of the three brilliant, tonally

unrooted passages which have served as the only opportunities for developing the exposition material. Although the 'development section' was indeed considerably more developmental in character than the exposition, it worked almost completely independently of the exposition's thematic material. Perhaps aware that the treatment he has so far given his main themes may seem inadequate given the scale and complexity of the movement as a whole, Dutilleux does not follow the course of the exposition at this point in the recapitulation, but embarks on a long and intense development of both themes (from b. 263) which continues unabated until the very end of the movement, disrupting the smooth and predictable course which the recapitulation has so far followed. Having just been stated, in order, in the tonic tonality, the two subjects are now taken in reverse order, contorted and taken through a restless harmonic progression which avoids the tonic until almost the last bar, and indeed largely avoids tonal stability of any kind. The high-point of this section comes at b. 293 (ff, risoluto), when the first subject appears in counterpoint with its own augmentation (see ex. 1.17). This might well also be considered to be the climax of the movement as a whole, and one of the reasons for its prominence is that it is the first and only time in the movement when a crescendo reaches its culmination in a high register, rather than at

the bottom of a rapid descent.

Ex. 1.17

Piano sonata, i, b. 293-6



For six bars (293-8) the music is purely octatonic, drawn from a collection which includes the C# major/minor triad but excludes the 'tonic' F#. The harmony here (C# major/minor with an added sixth) and right-hand melody are those of the opening bars of the movement, transposed from tonic to dominant. Even though the C# tonal focus weakens, the octatonic set remains predominant for most of the following twenty-five bars (to b. 317), during which a more complete statement of the combination of first subject and augmentation reappears in E major/minor (305-11). This augmentation is then taken up as the main melodic material, set over an offbeat bass ostinato based on the minor third B-G#, before the octatonic set is transposed a semitone higher and the ostinato extended to include a third pitch. A rise of one more semitone finally brings the melody onto F#, but at the same moment

a new bass-line develops which is wholly dissonant to the tonic harmony. This sets the pattern for the rest of the movement, in which the melody returns twice more to F# while the bass and harmony (much of it octatonic) withhold the tonic chord until the very last moment.

Though it does, in the end, close on the F# major/minor with which it began, the way in which this last section sums up the sonata-form movement is quite opposite from the kind of tonal and thematic resolution one would expect from a more traditional coda. It is worth considering this in relation to the main themes of the movement: in particular, to the kind of continuity which these themes always set in motion. Each time the first subject group appears - twice in the exposition and once more at the beginning of the recapitulation - it begins with a clearly defined tonality, a traditional four-voice texture, and regular four-bar phrases. It soon moves to a related but less stable 'subdominant' area, in which the regular pulse and phrase lengths are subject to variation, which in turn leads to abandoning most of its initial regularities altogether: the rooted tonality, the texture consisting simply of melody, harmony and bass-line, and the clear phrases. In the second subject group the moment of focus is neither so prolonged nor so well-defined, and it does not occur at the very beginning of

the section; but once it has appeared a similar process of dissolution occurs.

To follow the recapitulation of these two passages, each of which can be seen as charting a process of unravelling, with a coda based on cadences confirming the tonic key would have been to recreate the cliché associated with the form rather than to end the movement with a more considered response to the characteristics of its particular material. It was not until his next major work, the first symphony of 1951, that Dutilleux felt able to end a movement on an explicitly unresolved complex harmony, but within the limits of his style at this stage in his career (and those limits are considerably stretched in the course of this work) the final section and its extremely laconic 'resolution' certainly show an awareness of the precarious position tonality and thematicism hold even in this relatively traditional work.

Lied (second movement)

The title of the second movement, Lied, suggests not only the lyricism of a song, but also a certain teutonic gravity: although it is a lyrical movement with (in the outer sections, at least) a continuous singing line, it is through-composed, serious, dense in its interweaving of chromatic, contrapuntal lines; in a word, Lied as opposed

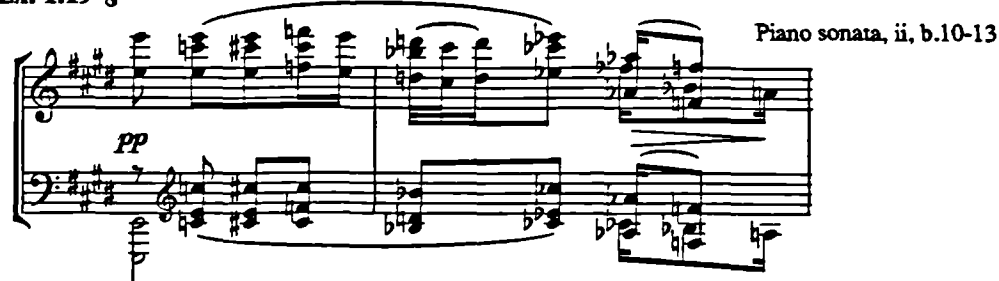
to mélodie.

It is a reflection of this that the form of the movement, a ternary design typical of lyric pieces, should also show hints of sonata-form organisation. Although the first section (b. 1-41) is closer to a small ternary design than a typical sonata exposition, it does set up two rival tonal areas and associates each with a different theme. The first tonal area is Db, and though it is usually notated with a five-flat key signature the music associated with it is so full of semitonal movement across the third and sixth degrees of the scale that there is not really any clear differentiation between major and minor modes, and it makes relatively little difference when the music is recapitulated in the third part (at b. 80) in a key signature of C# minor (see ex. 1.18).

Ex. 1.18

Piano sonata, ii, b.1-9

The musical score for Ex. 1.18 is written for piano and consists of two systems of staves. The first system is marked 'Assez lent' and 'p' (piano). The second system is marked 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'poco crescendo'. The music is in D-flat major (five flats) and 4/4 time. It features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chromatic movement and a final cadence in the second system.

Ex. 1.19 *g*

The second theme (b. 10ff; see ex. 1.19) is of a kind that becomes increasingly important for Dutilleux as an alternative way of establishing pitch hierarchy as traditional tonal relationships play less and less of a role in his music: the two chief components are a particular pitch reiterated several times (in combination with one or more harmonies) and then, growing out of this, a short phrase which oscillates around that same pitch before returning to it. (As in the case of the second-subject melody in the first movement (ex. 1.16 above) this trait of Dutilleux's may owe something to César Franck and his melodic style.) Also foreshadowing Dutilleux's later music are the quiet, wide-spaced chords of this passage, with the same pitches at top and bottom, their very deliberate placing clearly articulating the beginning of a new musical idea. Here the highlighted pitch is E (in various different registers), and the harmonies which move around it do not function as a new 'tonic' so much as outlining E as a kind of pseudo-dominant in some new

tonality: that is, an important harmonic area which seeks resolution (but not onto Db). All four statements of the theme are differently harmonised, and in the third and fourth statements (b. 14-19) the movement of parallel triads in the inner voices and the bass-line come closer to placing the E within a specifically A-based tonality, though this new 'tonic' A is certainly not stated and only obliquely implied. Although the middle section of the movement (b. 42-74) largely escapes tonal definition, its opening phrases (42-48) are clearly centred on E (and again this note provides the boundaries at the top and bottom of the texture). Like the development of the first movement, after starting in the tonal area established by the second subject this middle section makes scarcely any further reference to the opening, but develops its own independent material to provide a large-scale contrast in the central part of the movement.

When the two themes return in the third section of the overall ternary form (b. 74-97) it is this second theme which appears first, now circling around ab' and omitting the first two more ambiguous harmonisations so as to begin straight away with those which (in this new transposition) present the ab' as the fifth in the first theme's key of Db. The first theme then follows in the same tonality (as remarked above, changing to C# minor

makes little difference: certainly no more than differences such as the new ascending line in the lower left-hand part (b. 80-84; c.f. 1-5) which are independent of major or minor mode). Having brought both contrasting themes into the tonic key, this 'recapitulation' then draws to a close with a later version of the first theme (b. 89ff; c.f. 28-33) transposed and extended in such a way as to begin in E but resolve back into C#/Db. Though the harmonisation of the Es in b. 10-20 never really allowed that pitch to function as the relative major of the tonic area C#, the E tonality here is treated much more in that way, and this facilitates the resolution: the Ab/G# pedal in the bass turns from 'mediant' (89-93; it was F# in a Db context in b. 28-33) to 'dominant' in b. 94-95, so preparing the way for the final tonic chord.

This account deliberately gives emphasis to aspects of the movement's formal design which reflect a sonata structure; there are also parts of the Lied which run counter to this interpretation, however, such as the second half of the first main section (i.e. b. 21-41). Here, after the second theme in its contrasting key area, the music returns to the 'tonic' key to recall the first few bars of the first theme (b. 21ff). But for the first seven bars (21-27) these opening phrases are given twice,

not in their 'normal' form, but inverted.²² The inversion only concerns the melodic line; the rest of the texture is freely recomposed within the chromatically elaborated tonal region of Db (b. 21-23) and then G (24-25), modulating back to Db through bars 26 and 27. Dutilleux would have encountered the technique of melodic inversion in the course of his training in fugue, but this instance is rather more suggestive of Bartók's use of inversion, as in the first movement of his fifth quartet where exposition material returns inverted in the recapitulation. It is one of the first instances of Dutilleux experimenting with typically Bartókian techniques.

A brief reminder of the normal form (b. 28-9) then leads to a strangely unrelated passage (pp et sourd) which brings the first section to a close, but whose material is never heard again (b. 34-41). For these eight bars the music is strikingly Stravinskian, with its irregular alternation of two chords in a rapidly changing metre, the variable ostinato in the bass and the expressionless,

22 The inversion is strict if viewed in terms of tonal intervals, but not if measured atonally, in semitones: that is, thirds always invert to thirds, seconds to seconds, and so on, but a minor third sometimes changes to a major third, etc.

monotone 'chant' of the top line. With the repeated notes of this chant, and chords which almost resolve onto an E seventh harmony, combined with the independent movement of the bass towards E which it eventually reaches at b. 42, the passage can be seen as a distant relative of the second theme. Pursuing the analogy, the whole second half of the first section (b. 21-42) could be seen as a kind of thoroughly recomposed second exposition; however, it is important to recognise that its relation to the sonata model is far more tenuous and idiosyncratic than is typical of Dutilleux's music at this time.

The middle section ('Un poco più mosso', b. 42-73) fulfils a more conventional role in the movement as a whole, providing the contrast expected in a conventional ternary design. What is unusual is the way that Dutilleux creates the contrast, not so much by using different motivic material and tonal areas, as by gradually moving further and further away from any kind of tonal organisation, as well as concentrating increasingly on texture at the expense of theme. To begin with, two main motivic shapes (bb. 42ff and 45ff) dominate the arabesque-like lines which characterise this new section. But increasingly the motivic identity of the flowing lines is eroded, either by being distorted into shapes only loosely related to the original, as in b. 51ff, or, as in b. 58ff,

by being so continually and uniformly repeated that it simply becomes a characteristic of the texture.

At the same time, during the first sixteen bars of the section (42-58) the note E becomes gradually less important as a harmonic focus, while octatonic harmony becomes more and more pervasive, used in such a way as to avoid reference to any particular note or triad. Bars 42-44 contain many octatonic sequences, but these are not restricted to any one set, so that from this point of view the passage serves more as a source of motifs which have the potential for octatonic use later on. The particular octatonic set which is to predominate comes closer to the surface in b. 45ff, whose repeated motivic pattern subdivides the octave into equal steps of a minor third (on which the octatonic scale is based). Then from b. 48-50 the arabesque (together with its imitation in canon one bar later) becomes fully octatonic, while the E' emphasised in b. 48 is subsequently abandoned as a harmonic focus, and not resumed for the remainder of the middle section. In b. 51-57 the same octatonic mode continues to predominate even though reappearances of the chromatic motif from b. 45 bring in occasional foreign pitches.

By b. 58 the octatonic writing is quite free from any particular pitch emphasis. Two bass sonorities mark this

new stage in the music (bb. 58 and 61), recalling the E's of bb. 42 and 48, but their tritone transposition symmetrically confounds any particular tonal emphasis, while the symmetries of the octatonic set itself are exploited in the inversion relationship between right and left-hand parts.²³

For seven bars the texture is saturated with these motivic shapes, and is also exclusively octatonic in its pitch content (b. 58-64). The process of harmonic and motivic dissolution continues, however, from b. 65, when the right hand begins to neutralise the twisted contour of the motif into a simple line of descending steps, while the left hand begins to exaggerate both the zigzag contour and the wide leaps, thus blurring the motivic outline in a quite opposite way. At the same time, in both hands, the note at the upper boundary of each line is picked out and drawn into a progression which ascends (at different speeds in the two hands) in semitone steps. These two chromatic lines contribute to a dissolution throughout the

23 The symmetries are not exact, however: the inversion is altered and the right-hand contour changed so that e' and d#' occur in reverse order. The alteration may have been made in the belief that inexact symmetries are more interesting or beautiful than exact ones; it may also have been a way of introducing a parallel between the resulting e'-d#'-c#' and the e'"-d#'"-c#'" in the left hand.

texture of the octatonic focus, which has fully disappeared by b. 69. Throughout the whole passage there is also a blurring of rhythm and metre: the right hand moves out of synchronisation with the left-hand demisemiquavers to quintuplet hemidemisemiquavers in b. 64-5, and at the same time the left hand begins to accent notes at irregular intervals which undermine the notional $3/8$ metre.

The return of the first section in b. 74, in which tonal focus, theme and metre are reintroduced once more, is carefully prepared in the preceding bars. The last time the left hand descends into the low register G_4 is picked out, uniquely, by octave doubling and an mf marking (b. 69); this is then resumed as the dissonant bass-note over which the Db harmony reappears in b. 74. Meanwhile the two pitches of that harmony (which initially lacks a third, in keeping with the major/minor ambiguity of the Db tonality) form the end-points of the rising progressions²⁴ in the right and left hands.

Although the initial sonority of the reprise at b. 74

²⁴ The db" is anticipated in the left hand at b. 70, and is the end-point of the chromatic ascent from ab' beginning in b. 73. The ab''' is anticipated in the right hand by the repeated pattern f#'''-g'''-ab''' from b. 70.

is prepared in the preceding bars, the tonal, thematic and metric regularity which resumes when this chord is sounded is not anticipated in the preceding passage, and could not be, for this preceding music has managed to leave behind all these normal prerequisites of traditionally tonal music. There is thus something highly contingent about the way that this sonority, atonally prepared, then begins to unfold according to principles which are tonal, thematic, recapitulatory and so on. This is nicely reflected in the way that this climactic moment is, like the whole movement, extremely restrained in its dynamics.

Having negotiated the join back into the recapitulatory third section, Dutilleux does not attempt to mediate between these two kinds of music any further. Like the mysterious bars 34-41, the middle section leaves no trace on the subsequent course of the music, which returns to the much more traditional language of the opening section, not dissimilar from that of Roussel. The ternary contrast of the Lied thus embodies the strongest and most radical contrast in Dutilleux's music up to this time. If the idea of development section as contrasting middle section was first explored in the first movement, here Dutilleux takes it much further, challenging one of the tenets underlying his music up until then: for the first time he has constructed a movement using essentially

different kinds of material without needing to try to integrate them or draw them into a final synthesis.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the role of traditional forms and techniques in Dutilleux's early chamber music, and the way that they were combined with, and gradually superceded by, post-tonal ideas conceived at first very much under the shadow of Ravel, but also beginning to reflect Dutilleux's growing awareness of a wider range of more modern composers such as Stravinsky.

According to Claude Samuel, 'Dutilleux is ... one of those rare musicians who manage to express, within the bounds of tradition, an original personality'.²⁵ While he is certainly right to stress the importance of the traditional framework underlying Dutilleux's music, it might be more accurate to suggest that the composer's 'original personality' became more apparent the more that he freed himself from the 'bounds of tradition'.

25 'Dutilleux est un des rares musiciens qui trouvent la possibilité, dans le cadre de la tradition, ...d'exprimer une personnalité originale.' (Samuel 1962: 331).

The piano sonata summarises all the advances that Dutilleux had made during the 1940s, as well as some of his more retrogressive tendencies. Comparison between the piece and the nearly contemporary piano sonatas of Pierre Boulez can all too easily lead to stereotypical readings of both composers which place them at opposite extremes, setting Boulez's radical atonality, athematicism, and stylistic 'purity' against Dutilleux's traditional style and his eclecticism. Though in broad outline this characterisation is true, it obscures the quiet, tentative way in which Dutilleux is beginning to question traditional forms even while still trying, faute de mieux, to make music with them.

Chapter 2

The two symphonies.Introduction

In the 1950s Dutilleux turned to the orchestra as a medium for his most personal and concentrated expression; it was to remain at the centre of his oeuvre for the next forty years.¹ Two works in particular secured his international reputation and dominated his output: the two symphonies, completed at the beginning and the end of the decade respectively. Of the chamber works from the previous decade, only the piano sonata of 1948 gives any real indication of the scale, ambition and seriousness of what Dutilleux was to achieve in the following years. Nonetheless, in writing the symphonies Dutilleux benefitted from having explored in those earlier works certain post-tonal harmonic techniques and developed ways of using them to articulate forms which made flexible and individual use of traditional models.

1 Previous to this much of his experience of orchestral writing had been in the context of producing incidental music for films, radio and theatre (such as Les Hauts de Hurlevent (1945)). The last orchestral piece that Dutilleux had written as his own master was the short Danse fantastique (1943), intended to form part of a projected Symphonie de Danse (see Mari 1973: 38 and Potter 1997: 37-8, 43-6).

After a brief sketch of the biographical background during the 1950s, this chapter concentrates on the two symphonies, starting with the question of why Dutilleux chose to write in that particular genre, and what he considered to be the risks entailed. His newly developed antipathy towards sonata form is considered, as well as what is meant by the 'monothematicism' which he espoused instead.

The account of the first symphony begins with a brief review of its critical reception, before discussing the residual influence of older composers, and the general characteristics of its musical language: harmony and tonality, melodic and motivic writing. Two movements are examined in more detail, the first (passacaille) with special emphasis on its harmonic language, and the fourth (finale) with a complementary bias towards the role of thematic and motivic writing in the articulation of the movement's highly idiosyncratic form.

The second symphony is approached with a summary of critics' reactions to it, followed by a general appraisal of new developments in its musical language. Finally, analyses of the first two movements explore the motivic and formal labyrinths which Dutilleux constructs, and the different interpretations of sonata form which can be seen to underlie their design.

Dutilleux in the 1950s

Following the completion of the piano sonata in 1948, Dutilleux turned his thoughts to his first symphony, which was finished in May 1951.² The first performance, a radio broadcast on the 7th June that year,³ was warmly received and reviewed, and further performances quickly followed. Meanwhile he continued to work for the Radio Drama department of the O.R.T.F. throughout this period, and also kept up a modest output of smaller pieces, including short chamber works, orchestral songs and simple folksong arrangements.⁴ The most substantial work between the

2 There is some disagreement as to precisely when Dutilleux began work on the symphony. Jean Roy gives January 1950 (1962: 413), but Mari suggests that work was begun in 1949 (1973: 55). Given Dutilleux's working methods, which typically involve a long gestation period, it is very likely that the composer was already preoccupied with the symphony during 1949; Roy's date may refer to the period when detailed drafting was begun.

3 It was performed by the Orchestre National de la R.T.F. conducted by Roger Désormière. The first concert performance followed on the 29 July 1952 in Aix-en-Provence, given by the Südwestfunk Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon (Humbert 1985: 41).

4 The full list comprises the Choral, cadence et fugato for trombone and piano (1950; discussed in chapter 1) as well as the two sets of Chansons de Bord and a piano piece Blackbird from the same year; Le loup (1953); the final version of his Trois sonnets de Jean Cassou (1954) as well as incidental and occasional music.

first and second symphonies was undoubtedly Le loup, a ballet score composed for Roland Petit and the Ballets de Paris, to a scenario by Anouilh and Neveux, and first performed in March 1953, again to critical acclaim. Though the score is highly effective and generally well crafted, Dutilleux has since withdrawn his approval and discouraged performances, saying that the work was written in haste, and it is true that by comparison with the first symphony the work can seem patchy, at times showing the slightly stilted phrasing noted in parts of the piano sonata and earlier works, and overworking its two main themes. In the same year, 1953, Dutilleux received his first official accolade since the Prix de Rome of 1938, the Grand Prix du Portique, awarded every three years to a French composer under the age of forty (Mari 1973: 67-8). Just as the collaboration with the conductor Roger Désormière on the première of the first symphony had developed into a warm friendship, so Charles Munch's request for a second symphony (in 1955) led to a close relationship between the two men. The years 1957-9 were largely taken up with work on the new symphony, 'Le double'; Dutilleux travelled to Boston to hear the premiere in December 1959. Like the first, it was soon taken up by a number of different orchestras on both sides of the Atlantic; the French première followed in September 1960.

The symphonic genre

Dutilleux was well aware that the symphony was widely regarded as a genre of the past, viewed without enthusiasm by many of his contemporaries; indeed, with the notable exceptions of Roussel and Honegger, this had been the case in France since Debussy had pronounced it 'useless', if not for longer.⁵ The title of Dutilleux's 1965 article 'Who is still faithful to symphonic music?' has a slightly defensive air, and his tribute to Debussy (written in 1962) is initially concerned more with humble self-justification, as the author of two symphonies, than with homage (Dutilleux 1965: 10; Mari 1973: 212). In both articles he quotes Debussy's scathing definition, 'these studious and stilted exercises...', and adds his own gloss, saying that the word 'symphony' conjures up 'stifling' associations of undue length and utter predictability of form and procedure (Dutilleux 1965: 23). He also points out that the symphony was avoided by Debussy, Ravel and Bartók, the latter now moving into a prominent place in Dutilleux's pantheon.

5 'Il me semblait que, depuis Beethoven, la preuve de l'inutilité de la symphonie était faite' (Debussy, Monsieur Croche Antidilettante, quoted in Mari 1973: 212).

He continues, however, 'you can always try to retain the symphonic essence [substance] while freeing yourself from traditional rhetoric'. Although he does not attempt to define his understanding of what constitutes this 'symphonic essence', his comments on the post-Webernian developments of recent music give a clue, when he suggests that the concentration of such music on points and 'moments' has led composers and audiences alike away from 'the continuous sonorous flow of symphonic music'. Finally, if the orchestra is used so as to produce contrapuntal clarity rather than a homogenised 'magma', there remains, he believes, 'the possibility of composing symphonic works ... which are unified like those of the past, and open like those of the present'.⁶

If continuity of musical argument sustained on a symphonic scale was a goal Dutilleux had been working towards in his chamber music of the 1940s up to the piano sonata, the 'openness' and unpredictability of form within

6 '[V]ous pouvez toujours essayer de garder la substance symphonique en vous libérant de la rhétorique traditionnelle. ... [L]a musique post-webernienne [et l']art quintessencié qu'elle [a] mis en vogue, n'a pas peu contribué à détourner les créateurs et les auditeurs du flot sonore continu de la musique symphonique. ... [J]e reste persuadé qu'on peut composer des oeuvres symphoniques ... qui soient unitaires comme celles du passé et ouvertes comme celles du présent.' (Dutilleux 1965: 23).

each movement of the first symphony are what marks it out as the first work of Dutilleux's maturity. An important element in this achievement was Dutilleux's new attitude to sonata form, which he had used previously to provide a formal framework in several works including the recent piano sonata, as discussed in chapter 1 above.

In his programme note for the symphony, Dutilleux wrote of having 'taken care to distance himself quite deliberately from classical "Sonata" form. No theme A and theme B, no recapitulations'⁷. The comment suggests a tendency to view the sonata as an essentially thematic form: specifically, a bi-thematic form. For all their variety of approach and realisation, all his sonata movements from the 1940s are bithematic; even the first movement of the piano sonata uses two themes, although in terms of texture, harmonic rhythm and phrasing Dutilleux treats them as if they were different facets of a single idea. This can be seen as a step towards the abolition of a two-theme polarity in his later music. In the first symphony, as he later recalled, 'I wished each movement to be built on a single theme... [there was,] therefore, a

7 '[S]ouci de s'écarter délibérément de la forme classique "Sonate". Pas de thème A et B, ni de réexpositions' (quoted in Roy 1962: 414).

8

desire for monothematicism'.

Monothematicism

Taking their cue from comments such as this made by the composer (see also his similar remark cited in Mari 1973: 154), the 'monothematic' nature of both symphonies is regularly asserted by many critics. Mari says of the first symphony that 'each movement builds from the principal theme which is subject to numerous mutations ... the chief characteristic [of the form] is that a single melodic idea runs throughout the work'. And about the second symphony: 'Each panel in this large triptych is built from one theme which reigns throughout the entire work'.⁹ Antoine Goléa writes of the second symphony: 'first of all Dutilleux's symphony is, in all certainty, monothematic. A single initial cell governs the whole course of the music across the three movements ...', and

8 'Je souhaitais que chaque mouvement soit édifié sur un seul thème. ... Donc, une volonté de monothématisme' (Dutilleux 1993: 70).

9 '... [C]haque mouvement repose sur un thème principal sujet à de nombreuses mutations ... la principale consiste en ce qu'une même idée mélodique parcourt l'oeuvre et en scelle vigoureusement l'assise et l'unité' (Mari 1973: 154).

'Chaque volet de ce large triptyque repose sur un thème regnant sur toute l'oeuvre' (: 166).

10

both Max Pinchard and Daniel Humbert agree.

In my opinion, the composer's comments are to be understood in the light of his reaction against a bithematic sonata plan, and indicate an avoidance of any predictable contrast between two main themes in different keys and moods, rather than literally meaning that the whole symphony (or even each of its four movements) derives exclusively from a single theme. The crucial notion is formal flexibility and continuity, rather than the number of themes employed. The choice of a passacaglia for the opening movement of the first symphony was logical, if unusual, since its formal premise, the continuous and unchanging presence of the ostinato theme, is precisely the opposite of the two structurally opposed themes which characterise the sonata structures he now

10 'Tout d'abord, la Symphonie de Dutilleux est, de toute évidence, monothématique. Une seule cellule initiale en commande tout le déroulement, à travers ses trois mouvements ...' (Golée 1962: II, 163). Of the first symphony, Pinchard writes: 'Chaque mouvement est construite sur un thème unique', and of the second: 'une immense variation ... d'une idée unique' (1961, quoted in Roy 1962: 418-9). Humbert writes of the second: '[Theme] A2 est une variation de A1. En ce sens, le premier mouvement est monothématique.' (Humbert 1985: 64). Caroline Potter's approach to this issue seems to me to be more sensible: she is interested to trace the transformation of themes and instances of 'croissance progressive', but does not conclude from this that entire works are derived from a single motive (Potter 1997: 60-68).

wished to renounce. Nonetheless, the movement makes effective use of other themes whose identity is quite distinct from the ostinato (for example, the fugato theme at fig. 11). Other movements in the first symphony, as in the second, also include a variety of contrasting (and not particularly closely related) melodic material, which makes the comments cited above concerning the pervasiveness of 'a single melodic idea' in these works thoroughly misleading.

There is a similarly misleading consensus of opinion about the Finale con variazione which ends the first symphony, whose title is frequently taken at face value. Both Mari and Humbert regard the Finale con variazione as a conventional variation movement (Mari even labels different sections 'variation 1, 2 ...' etc.), while also describing a range of new and contrasting melodies, transitional sections and other developments which ought to have thrown their variation-set model into question (Mari 1973: 162-4; Humbert 1985: 48-51, 207; see also Pinchard 1961, quoted in Roy 1962: 418). Dutilleux is more accurate about this movement in the programme note which he wrote for the première: 'Each of the four parts (apart from the "finale") presents just one single

11
theme'.

The first symphony

Critical reception

Critical response to the early performances of the first symphony was very favourable, and revolved around the themes already discussed in the preceding paragraphs: Dutilleux's hard-won maturity and assurance, the significance of his choosing to write a symphony, the 'monothematic' construction of the work (see, for example the reviews by Vuillermoz, Jourdan-Morhange and Rostand, quoted in Roy 1962: 413-14); a decade later articles discuss the work's monothematicism, and enthuse about the sureness of touch and the quality of poetic enchantment (see the articles by Pinchard (1961, quoted in Roy 1962: 418), Goléa (1962: ii, 162), Roy (1962: 413-15) and Brelet (1963: ii, 1250). Potter sees the last two movements as a great advance on the first two in terms of originality of form, and particularly in their more extensive use of thematic transformation (1997: 61-2). Of the two more

11 'Chacune des 4 parties (à part la "finale") ne présente qu'un seul thème' (Roy 1962: 414). Forty years later, however, the general impression of monothematicism had come to dominate Dutilleux's memories of the piece, and he describes all four movements as monothematic (see Dutilleux 1993: 70).

detailed discussions of the work, in the monographs by Pierrette Mari and Daniel Humbert, Mari's discussion is brief, but in general it gives a clear guide to each movement by means of well chosen music examples. Both writers, however, make statements which it is difficult to endorse unreservedly. With reference to the first movement, for example, they explain that the passacaglia is an old dance of Spanish origin, without any mention of the form's subsequent history in the hands of such as Bach and Brahms, surely more relevant to Dutilleux's use of the term (Mari 1973: 154; Humbert 1985: 42 3). I have already indicated the inconsistencies of their accounts of finale con variazione, which reveal a determination to view the musical structure in conventional terms even when those terms are noticeably inappropriate. Humbert's account of the opening of the passacaille is particularly eccentric, for example: 'a long prelude featuring the clarinets leads to the theme of this movement at fig. 9', 'the theme' of the movement being according to him an idea which does not appear until b. 49, and after eight bars is never heard again. He is more convincing in his comments on the influence of older composers on the work.

12 'Un long prélude où interviennent les clarinettes, introduit le thème de ce mouvement, B, qui apparaît à 9...' (: 43).

Influences

In the final summary of his analysis Humbert suggests that the music of Roussel and Honegger may stand behind Dutilleux's symphony, and here he is surely on stronger ground (Humbert 1986: 51). Their influence has already been noted in the works discussed in chapter 1, but as Dutilleux adopts the genre with which they are particularly associated it becomes even more apparent. Like those composers, Dutilleux not only chooses to write symphonies, but arranges them in terms of essentially familiar movement types such as scherzos, slow movements, lively finales, and so on. (Honegger's fourth symphony of 1946 even includes a passacaglia). The parallel also extends to Dutilleux's wish to enliven these movements with music conceived and orchestrated contrapuntally (see his comment on p. 106 above).

A composer whose ideas make their first clear appearance in Dutilleux's music in this symphony is Bartók, in many ways a more 'modern' composer than Honegger, although of an earlier generation. Here too, the vigour and adventurousness of the older composer's counterpoint seems to have inspired Dutilleux. Pierrette Mari writes of 'un climat atonal bartokien' in one passage in the first movement, for example (1973: 156), and surely

has in mind the densely chromatic counterpoint of the opening fugue from the Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta; in Dutilleux's symphony the passage in question (figs 11-14) even has quasi-fugal entries transposed successively by perfect fifths, like those in the Bartók.

The influence of Stravinsky is less noticeable than in Dutilleux's earlier works, but it is possible to discern certain instances of harmony, scoring and spacing which are strongly if fleetingly evocative of passages from the three early ballets, including Le sacre du printemps (c.f., for example, figs 47-54 in the symphony's finale, and the oscillating triads from the opening of part 2 of Le sacre). As in the oboe and piano sonatas, Dutilleux also makes occasional use of a bass ostinato reiterating a minor third, as at fig. 20 of the passacaille (c.f. fig. 2 of the first movement from the Symphony in three movements, for example), but all these ideas seem to have been much more thoroughly assimilated by Dutilleux than those in the oboe sonata, for example, and are fully integrated into their context.

Harmony and tonality

In general, Dutilleux's harmonic and melodic ideas evolve from the same techniques examined in earlier works, but they are increasingly smoothly integrated. At one extreme

there are overtly triadic harmonies arranged into phrases with clear tonal associations; these are less frequent than in the piano sonata but still help to define the principal tonal areas of movements, as at fig. 46 in the scherzo or at the beginning of the intermezzo, for example. Such phrases also occur in the outer movements, but here the tonal area which they affirm is usually more temporary in character, and both of these movements are much more equivocal about the notion of a principal tonal area, as will be discussed further below.

The use of restricted pitch collections as a source of harmonic focus, or 'colour', such as octatonic or modal writing, is less common than in earlier scores, and tends only to appear briefly in transition, integrated into sequences which draw on a variety of different harmonic models, as in the Aria from the oboe sonata (see exx. 1.9 and 1.10 on pp. 44 and 46 above).

Dutilleux also makes much use of triadic harmonies superimposed onto a bass whose harmonic implications, taken in isolation, are different from, or contradict, the upper layer. The bass layer may itself consist of triads, as in ex. 1.5 on p. 37 above, or it may be a simple bass-line with or without octave doubling. Although both of these possibilities had already been explored in earlier works, in the first symphony Dutilleux begins to develop

much greater independence between the two layers, and over longer spans, perhaps as a consequence of his growing commitment to contrapuntal writing. The path traced by the higher layer is often determined by a melodic idea spelt out in the uppermost note of each chord; this way of providing a structure for harmonic progression from the top down becomes increasingly characteristic in Dutilleux's mature music, while the lower layer ceases to resemble a harmonic bass-line, and is sometimes dispensed with altogether. This tendency can be traced in the gradual development of Dutilleux's harmonic style from the 1940s to the 1970s, but a similar evolution, from a bass-driven relationship between the two layers, to equality of importance and independence, to the bass playing an incidental role and eventually disappearing altogether, is also traced, in miniature, through the course of the passacaille.

The scherzo and intermezzo from the first symphony are the last movements by Dutilleux which begin and end with a clear endorsement of a relatively unambiguous principal harmonic area represented by a simple triad (though even the scherzo begins with an introduction which forms a transition from the end of the passacaille, before the main tonal centre is established at fig. 36). In the future Dutilleux was to create more complex tonal schemes,

whether in the succession of tonalities, which may not return to where it began, or in the use of non-triadic harmonic centres (or both). The first and last movements of the symphony begin to explore harmonic schemes of this sort, and will be examined in greater detail below.

Melodies and motives

Although Dutilleux's increasing use of more or less independent harmonic 'layers' in his music suggests a contrapuntal model, the different layers are still often characterised in terms of (upper layer) melodies, (middle layer) chords or accompaniment patterns, and (lower layer) bass-lines, such as he had continued to use right up to the piano sonata. While such old-fashioned, quasi-harmonic textures are less characteristic of the passacaille, which looks forward to later works in the equality of interest in the characterisation of its different layers, in the three remaining movements melody-and-accompaniment is quite common, and despite the unfailingly lucid and attractive orchestration with which it is clothed, such textural hierarchy remains probably the most conservative aspect of the score.

Thus, in the last three movements, the melodic writing is most often found in a prominent upper voice. The symphony includes some of Dutilleux's last rounded,

self-contained melodies in a Ravellian or 'neo-classical' mould, but for the most part it is concerned with developing shorter and less conclusive motivic ideas in a continuing development, or 'croissance progressive' of the kind noted in the oboe sonata on pp. 46-7 above. Having renounced the clear-cut opposition of two sonata-style subjects, Dutilleux is beginning to explore a variety of more subtle relationships between motivic ideas, in which the similarity between two initially different ideas is gradually revealed, or, in a contrary process, one initial motive is developed in different directions, or where motives are combined in different ways.

As in chapter 1, the developments in Dutilleux's musical language which have been discussed so far in isolation will now be put back into context in the following case studies, which will examine the passacaille and the finale con variazione. While the aim of both analyses is to consider how the different compositional parameters interact to produce the distinctive form and character of that individual movement, in the first of them my comments will place special emphasis on the harmonic organisation, while in the second the main focus will be on the thematic or motivic writing and the role this plays in delineating the form.

Passacaille (first movement)

As was mentioned in the discussion of monothematicism above, Dutilleux's decision to open his symphony with a passacaglia as a weighty, symphonic alternative to a bithematic sonata movement, is logical, if unusual. Against the repetitions of the bass ostinato Dutilleux pits a variety of other ideas, some developed out of the bass theme, some independent of it. The piece proceeds almost throughout by a process of intensification, building to a first high-point at fig. 10 and then to the climax of the movement at fig. 22. Only after this, in the closing bars, is the basic tendency of the music reversed as the textures become more rarefied and the ostinato theme dissolves in rhythm and contour. This overall scheme of a long crescendo and a short, fading aftermath, may have been influenced by the first movement of Bartók's Music for strings..., to which there is a much more precise reference in the middle of Dutilleux's movement (see pp. 113-4 above). But a closer model is the first movement of Honegger's third symphony, which builds continuously to a climax situated, like Dutilleux's, much nearer the end of the movement than Bartók's. Most similar of all to Dutilleux's scheme is the first movement of Lutosławski's Concerto for orchestra, which was written later (completed in 1954); it

is interesting to consider whether Lutosławski might have heard Dutilleux's symphony, for example at its performance in Cologne in May 1953 which was broadcast by Radio Cologne, or whether the similarities are merely the product of their shared antecedents in Bartók and others.

Within this very clear overall shape the piece can be heard to fall into five main sections which run together continuously. In the first the ostinato theme is presented (hereafter O), and then above it other ideas which gradually become more autonomous from the bass in both their phrasing and their harmony. In the second section (from fig. 11) another motivic idea is introduced, still over the bass ostinato, and built up in a fugato, towards the end of which O drops out for a few bars. It returns in the third section (from fig. 14) in the treble register, where it remains for the rest of the movement, though it is rarely the highest element in the texture. At first it is harmonised by block chords, with the fugato theme as a counter melody. In the fourth section (from fig. 18) a new figure in triplet crotchets is woven around it and this is built up to the second and biggest climax of the movement, after which there is a coda (from fig. 22) in which O dies away in the highest register. The five sections are set out in Table 2.1, together with a more detailed breakdown into smaller subsections which

will be explained later on.

Table 2.1 Formal plan of Passacaille, first symphony.

Section	Fig.	Description
I.i	(beginning)	Ostinato theme O. Upper harmonies follow same 4-bar phrases.
I.ii	6	2-bar sequence in upper parts; Upper harmonies begin to become independent from bass in 2 stages: fig. 6; fig. 6 +4.
I.iii	9	Return to texture of fig. 6, with harmonies of fig. 6 +4. New melodic line added above.
I.iv	10	Tutti climax on E (with neighbouring D# / F).
II.i	11	Theme B (fugato).
II.ii	13	Ostinato drops out, strings continue to develop theme B.
III.i	14	Ostinato re-enters, accompanied in parallel block-chords with theme B above as a counter melody.
III.ii	16	Theme B above and below Ostinato, now accompanied by block-chords in whole-tone harmony.
IV.i	18	New variant of O in triplet crotchets.
IV.ii	20	New dotted rhythm, new ostinato-figure in bass, Ostinato theme O contracts to shorter phrases.
IV.iii	21 +4	Tutti: principal climax (octatonic harmony).
V	22	Coda, 4/2 time: O in treble, distorted in rhythm and intervals, at new pitch-level.

Clearly, since the entire movement is founded on repetitions of O, this theme will be paramount in defining

any sense of tonality the movement may have. In the more detailed discussion which follows I shall consider firstly the harmonic implications of *O* itself, and secondly the ways in which Dutilleux is able to superimpose different harmonic progressions onto the ostinato theme, with particularly close focus on section I.

When it first appears unaccompanied in the bass, *O* bears some resemblance to the opening of the oboe sonata, with its crotchets in 3/2 time, its harmonically inconclusive return to E and its undulating contour (see ex. 2.1i). But the differences are significant. In contrast to the oboe sonata, whose opening measures are densely chromatic and totally non-triadic, the bass motive of the symphony clearly outlines an A minor triad in the course of the first two bars. From here the line can be heard as a compound melody, as shown in ex. 2.1ii: the low F' in b. 3 acts as a bass-note for the inner voices of b. 3-4 which move back from the Bb minor triad in b. 3 towards the initial A minor chord repeated in b. 5ff, where a fuller harmonic resolution would call for the F' to fall a semitone to the low E'. But it does not: at b. 5 the whole phrase is simply repeated, forming the ground-bass ostinato; each time the tension between the high E and the low F' is left unresolved.

Ex. 2.1 (i) Ostinato theme (O)

First symphony, i, b. 1-4

pp

c.f.

pp

Oboe sonata, i, b. 1-4

ii voice-leading analysis

rising line from A' to C

unresolved

omitting lowest voice (unresolved F)

descending line from B' to A'

both models combined

(still omitting lowest voice)

Three features of this ostinato theme play an important part in the tonal definition of the movement. As both Mari and Humbert have observed, the theme moves through two main harmonic areas: firstly the A minor triad, then the more chromatic second half (Mari 1973: 155; Humbert 1985: 43). As the theme is repeated these create a continual oscillation over a four-bar cycle between an area of relative tonal clarity and one of chromatic harmonic movement. Secondly, as Humbert notes (: 43) the emphasis in the first of these areas is on E, rather than on A. Thirdly, in the contrasting and shifting harmonies of the second area the clearest emphasis is reserved for the F', which is to play an important role throughout the movement in a dissonant relation to E. (A similar role is played by the D# in b. 4, although in the context of the ostinato theme alone it

is not as prominent, partly because it is not approached by such a striking leap as the F', and partly because it is not left unresolved like the F', but leads back to its neighbour E in b. 5.) In the movement as a whole, however, both these notes together with the E against which they are dissonant are highlighted at moments of structural importance. In addition to these features, there is also a recurring and characteristic harmony which is consonant to the ostinato figure but found only in other layers of the music: this is a C major harmony, often with an added-sixth so that it incorporates the pitches from the first two bars of the bass ostinato.

The tonal focus of the movement as a whole cannot be identified simply as a triad or a central pitch, but is a complex formed by the interaction of these different factors, centred around E, dominated harmonically by the interaction and overlap between A minor and C major-added-sixth, and characterised by periodic oscillations between these harmonies and more chromatic movement. One final, crucial factor in the tonal profile of the movement as a whole is that the 'complex' outlined above only characterises the movement from the beginning to the main climax at the end of section IV. In the short final section the ostinato theme and the tonal and harmonic elements associated with it are radically transformed, and

the movement ends with a sequence of harmonies designed to evoke the greatest possible distance from the tonality of the main part of the movement which preceded it.

Section I.i

In the opening bars Dutilleux establishes the ground-bass ostinato, unaccompanied, before adding an upper layer of new material which corresponds to its rhythmic and harmonic outline, falling like the ostinato into four-bar phrases which are each repeated. Every phrase in the upper layer begins with the minor second e/f, thus encapsulating the poles of the ostinato theme in its opening sonority. When chords are introduced, at fig. 2, they coincide with the bass in a four-bar cycle alternating (relatively) triadic stability and chromatic movement. The opening chord, however, rather than elaborating the A minor of the bass, includes a prominent E major triad and exists in an uneasy but dependent relation to the bass comparable to that of a dominant chord over a tonic bass-line. The opposition of tonic and dominant alignment (with respect to the A minor bass triad) continues in the fifth and sixth ostinato statements (figs 4 and 5), where the sustained clarinet trills (which offer the clearest pitch focus in an otherwise rather disjointed texture) move from e in the

first two bars to a in the last two.

Section I.ii

At fig. 6 a new repeating pattern of four chords is introduced, which gradually becomes more independent of the bass ostinato in various respects. The four chords make up a two-bar phrase structure, and although this continues to coincide with the ostinato every four bars, it cuts against the bass's rhythm of triadic and chromatic alternation. Texturally the chords are strongly contrasted with the bass part, as are the rich and consonant harmonies, which are initially all based on major triad added-sixth chords. They have their own rhythm of tension and relaxation, and each 2-bar phrase makes two alternations of this kind, the first milder and the second emphasised by the abruptly shortened last chord.

The first of the four chords begins in a fully consonant relation to the bass, though the strong melody note g' reinterprets the bass-line to suggest a different fundamental to that previously implied: C rather than A. C major harmony (often with an added-sixth which includes the A minor triad in the chord) is to play a noticeable role as the most prominent consonant sonority of the movement. As if to parallel the emphasis on E and its

neighbours D# and F, the chord is generally associated with a *melodic insistence on G, F# and Ab*, and these are the notes of the motive formed by the four chords of this phrase (hereafter referred to as motive A). The phrase begins in consonance with the bass, but it becomes less so. The second chord, for example, though richly consonant in itself, is dissonant in relation to the bass-line. Nevertheless, there is still a degree of harmonic compatibility in that throughout b. 33-6 (fig. 6 - 6+3) all of the chords relate to the bass in terms of derivation from the same octatonic collection.

When motive A is repeated two bars later, over the second half of the ostinato, it is transposed down a tone (together with its harmonisation), as if in a sequence: this is a new and important procedure which has no relation to the ostinato. The next statement (fig. 6 +4) appears to break the continuity in terms of harmony, tessitura and texture, but the top line (motive A) remains the same, continuing the sequence of transposition by a descending tone (allowing for the octave jump into the higher tessitura). It is given a new harmonisation which sets the opening note of motive A as the third of the chord rather than the fifth, but then generates the remaining chords very much as before, stepping in contrary motion inwards for the second chord and back out for the

third (which is the same as the first) and fourth.

After this partial break in continuity at fig. 6 +4, the phrase in its new harmonisation goes on being transposed downwards sequentially by a tone throughout the following passage as far as fig. 9. But it also grows more independent of the bass-line; one reason for the change in harmonisation may be that the second and fourth chords no longer stand out as dissonant to the bass, since the whole relation to the bass is weaker, and therefore needs to be made more intrinsically dissonant if the rhythm of tension and release is to be maintained. There are still some shared octatonic derivations between chords and bass at fig. 6 +4, but after fig. 7 the two strands of music go their separate ways until fig. 10 (ex. 2.2).

Ex. 2.2 Harmonic skeleton from fig. 6

fig. 6 First symphony, i.

Collection i Collection ii Collection iii

* filled notes designate pitches outside prevailing octatonic collection

fig. 6 +4

In this section the gradual emancipation of the middle layer from the harmonic implications of the bass represents the first important step in the process of transferring the harmonic focus from the bottom to the top of the texture, which runs through the course of this movement. It is also noteworthy that the consistent and coherent element in the progression from one chord to the next in the middle layer is the 'melody' formed by the top notes of the chords.

Another important aspect of the growing independence of the upper lines through this passage is the greater continuity opened up by the sequence, by comparison with the short phrases which have dominated the music up to this point. With the harmonic continuity that the sequence provides, Dutilleux is able to make textural contrasts all the greater without risk of losing a sense of direction. In fact, the music at fig. 7 is so strongly contrasted in its brilliant, pointillist texture that the sequence which provides its harmonic structure has gone unnoticed, at least in the published literature on the symphony. The four basic chords are disguised with a certain amount of 'neighbour-note' decoration and repetition, but for all the proliferation of detail the underlying progression is clear, as ex. 2.3 shows.

Ex. 2.3 Harmonic skeleton figs 7-8

First symphony, i.

The musical notation for Ex. 2.3 consists of two systems, labeled 'fig. 7' and 'fig. 8'. Each system is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music is in 2/4 time. The first system (fig. 7) shows a series of sustained chords in the treble staff and a moving line in the bass staff. The second system (fig. 8) continues this pattern with similar harmonic structures. The notation includes various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and note values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes).

Section I.iii

At fig. 8 the texture returns abruptly to the rich sonorities of fig. 6, with sustained added-sixth chords in the middle register. The first bar of this new section presents the fifth at the top of the sustained chord, as at fig. 6, and also the third, D#, prominently featured above this in the new melodic voice which now appears above the chords. In this way the passage makes reference to both initial stages of the sequence: to motive A at fig. 6, in the chord layout and the scoring, and to the moment when this motive was reharmonised four bars later in the emphasis on D# over a B major harmony. Over the next eight bars the chords rise in a series of semitone steps which retrace the course of the sequence back up to

the f[#]"/g"/ab" line with which it began.¹³

Ex. 2.4 Harmonic skeleton, figs 6-10

First symphony, i.

The musical notation consists of two systems. The first system contains figures 6, 7, and 8. Figure 6 is a piano introduction with a treble staff and a bass staff containing an ostinato. Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10 are chords in the treble staff. Figure 9 includes the annotation 'etc. rising in semitones'.

Section I.iv

As ex. 2.4 shows, the entire progression culminates in a unison outburst (fig. 10), the first of the two climaxes of the movement, which reasserts E at the centre of the harmony, emphasised with the help of its semitonal neighbours D[#] and F⁴. Rising semitones E-F-F[#]-G-Ab-A⁴ underlie the extremes of range covered in this violent passage, which, like so many of the ideas in this movement is immediately repeated, now starting from the cluster D[#]-E-F and tracing the progression one step further. As ex.

13 The added-sixth note is omitted from those chords where a seventh is already present, either in the violins' melodic line above, or in the bass ostinato below. Otherwise the chords rise in uniform parallel movement.

2.5 shows, this line, in combination with notes from the bass ostinato through which it weaves, provides a starting point for the new fugato theme (B) which follows.

Ex. 2.5 Theme B

First symphony, i.

fig. 11

p

Derivation of theme B

Harmonic skeleton

fig. 10 + 4

Section II

As remarked on pp. 113-4 above, the fugato which develops at fig. 11 is strongly reminiscent of that in Bartók's Music for strings..., and the effect of the passage would be atonal were it not anchored by the bass ostinato. At fig. 13 -2 the counterpoint begins to focus on a particular set of harmonies with a chromatic figure in the uppermost line which culminates in the three pivotal notes e" d#" f". The bass ostinato then drops out and the chromatic figure is developed in all five contrapuntal parts, until the top line rises at fig. 13 +3 to explore

the other set of pivotal notes g", ab", f#", before resolving onto the harmony these notes have become associated with, C major.

Section III

At fig. 14 the ostinato theme O reappears as a treble melody, from which Dutilleux suspends a series of rich parallel chords in root-position; theme B appears in inversion as a counter-melody above. The idea is duly repeated before a new combination is introduced: O is now decked in whole-tone harmonies without any bass at all, while B now appears both above and below, in an inversion canon. After repetition this leads into -

Sections IV and V

The new triplet variant of O at fig. 18 unfolds its counterpoint downwards from each melodic note, thus featuring the lower neighbour d#" rather than F. On repetition, however, this motif is developed above the ostinato to fall from f" in the line f"-e"-d#. When it next rises above the ostinato it enters with the other set of pivotal notes ab"-g"-f#" (fig. 19 +3). From this point on the ostinato dominates the texture melodically, and focuses increasingly on E as it is shortened to two bars and then one bar (figs 20-22; the theme undergoes a similar process of compression from fig. 24 to the end).

Underneath, a quasi-harmonic bass-line is reasserted, underpinning the E of the melody with a progression which outlines an octatonic collection (see ex. 2.6); harmony based on this octatonic collection spreads to the entire orchestra in the climactic bars 135-6 (fig. 22 -2). This is an essentially new interpretation of the movement's central pitch, clearly distinct from the A minor and related C major harmonies which have mostly been associated with it. It also casts a new light on the relation of F and E, bringing together both pitches at the climax in a seven-note harmony in which F is no longer either dissonant or unresolved.

Ex. 2.6 Octatonic bass-line



Thus, the climax of b. 135-6 acts as a kind of harmonic denouement, in which the predominant harmonic focus of the movement up to this point (A minor/C major) is eclipsed, and the recurring harmonic tension of the ostinato, which had helped to provide impetus throughout the movement, is dissipated. In the coda which follows (from fig. 22), the ostinato theme is (for the first time) transposed to a different pitch level and altered in its

intervallic contour, as well as adapting its rhythm to a 4/2 metre whose longer bars and slower tempo undermine its previous rhythmic drive. Tonality and texture are equally transformed, and when in the closing bars (from fig. 25) the opening notes of the movement reappear in the highest register, their new harmonic context reflects none of the tensions of the opening. After the melody and harmonies have been left completely without bass support from fig. 22, the bass re-enters at fig. 25. The final bass-line continues its descent, extending beyond the low E' of b. 155 to a deeper bass-note (C#') for another seven-note harmony (like that of the climax) again combining previously dissonant neighbours, E and D#, in an ethereal sonority of great beauty.

Finale con variazione

The finale is a long movement of very original formal design, which takes as its starting point the least conventional aspects of the final movement Choral et Variations from the piano sonata. The similarities with that movement can be summarised as follows. Firstly, there are parallels in the architecture of the opening sections of each movement, in which the 'theme' is presented (i.e. the Choral from the sonata, and from the beginning to fig. 5 in the symphony): in both cases a strident and declamatory opening reaches a grand but

provisional cadence, followed by a quieter restatement which quickly builds up again and leads directly into a fast 'variation 1'. More important, perhaps, is the way that in both instances Dutilleux builds a large movement starting from a small motif - in the symphony little more than four notes - and does so by introducing a variety of contrasting ideas throughout the rest of the movement and combining the 'theme' with them from time to time. Like the finale of the piano sonata, though not so rigorously, the symphony's finale also emulates the contrasting movements of a symphony with its different sections (i.e. introduction - allegro - scherzo - adagio). In neither piece is there any sense of the theme determining the form of the individual variations, in terms of phrase and cadence structure, for example. Finally, in contrast to the piano sonata, the overall shape of the finale of the symphony is conceived as one long diminuendo, balancing the crescendo design of the passacaille, as Dutilleux has pointed out (1993: 70).¹⁴

Table 2.2 summarises the main formal elements of the movement, with particular reference to the different

14 Mari and Humbert make a similar point less convincingly, claiming that the ending of the symphony returns to the mood of the opening (despite the marked contrasts of theme, key, metre, tempo, and texture!) (Mari 1973: 164; Humbert 1985: 51).

themes and motives involved, as it is these on which the following discussion will concentrate. The main sectional divisions of Mari's analysis are indicated alongside my own (Mari 1973: 162-4).

Table 2.2 Formal plan of Finale con variazione, first symphony.

Section	Fig.	Description	Mari's analysis
Introduction	(beginning)	Motive t develops into -	(Introduction)
Theme	3	Theme T (recalled from 3rd mvt)	Theme
I.i	5	Allegro, 2/4. Descending motive M, T worked in at fig. 6	Variation I
I.ii	9	New themes A and B	Variation II
II.i	16	New melody C	Variation III
II.ii	18	C developed over rising accompanimental progression	
II.iii	24	A and C combined	Variation IV
III.i	28	Scherzo, 3/8. A and B	Variation V
III.ii	33	Canonic treatment	
III.iii	39	Isorhythmic treatment	
III.iv	44	M as principal melody	
IV	47	9/8, 3/4. A and B, fig. 49 +2: T and C added	Variation VI
V	55	Lento, 5/4 D (c.f. theme B from <u>Passacaille</u>) including references to C and T	Coda

The following paragraphs consider the use of themes and motives in this movement, and are intended to complement the approach taken above with the passacaglia, which focussed principally on harmony and tonality. Harmonies and harmonic movement are discussed, but only in so far as they impinge on or are determined by motivic considerations; this is not to imply that they are less interesting or important to the structure of the movement, but simply a way of clarifying the subject of my discussion.

Introduction and 'Theme'

The harmonic progression of the opening tutti recalls the passacaille (e.g. fig. 6), in that chords moving in contrary motion are 'hung' from a melodic motive in the top voice, over a separate bass-line. The opening and most insistent harmony is a C# major/minor chord over a G# bass. The melodic motive (which is inverted in the bass) is a distortion of the main motive from the Intermezzo and in the course of the first thirteen bars it gradually assumes its original form, presented by solo cello and cor anglais at fig. 3 (see ex. 2.7). Throughout its transformations it always returns to its opening pitch at the end of each phrase, a characteristic of Dutilleux's thematic ideas already encountered in the piano sonata,

and which can still be discerned in his later works.

Ex. 2.7 Development of motive t in melodic line at opening of finale

First symphony, iv.

ff (Harmony omitted)

loco

Theme T

fig. 1

fig. 2

fig. 3

(theme T)

One other motive should be mentioned, although on its first appearance here it is hardly articulated as such. From fig. 2 the middle layer of chords moves in a sequence of alternately rising and falling steps which gradually descends. The same contour reappears at fig. 4, and then in the trumpets and woodwind at fig. 5; I refer to it hereafter as M (see ex. 2.8).

Ex. 2.8 motive M

First symphony, iv.

ff

motive M

inversion of t'

fig. 2

fig. 4+2

poco allarg.

Allegro

fig. 5

pp

cresc.

cresc. molto

ff

ff

(harmonic skeleton)

Section I.i

Fig. 5 introduces the main allegro tempo for the next large section of the movement (I) and at fig. 6 theme T appears, soon to be broken down in a reversal of the process traced in the movement's opening bars. It settles into an ostinato pattern based on perfect fifths and minor ninths with a tonal basis on C, and from this ostinato a new theme appears at fig. 9.

This 'theme' is a line of even quavers which proceeds in a succession of continually altered repetitions of its

initial motivic contours. The constant and undifferentiated rhythm, which gives the music the character of passage-work, restricts Dutilleux's interest in motivic development and growth to a manipulation of the intervallic contour. Examination of these contours and their development reveals that, contrary to its articulation as one continuous idea, the theme consists of two quite distinct thematic shapes A and B, which are¹⁵ freely repeated and alternated.

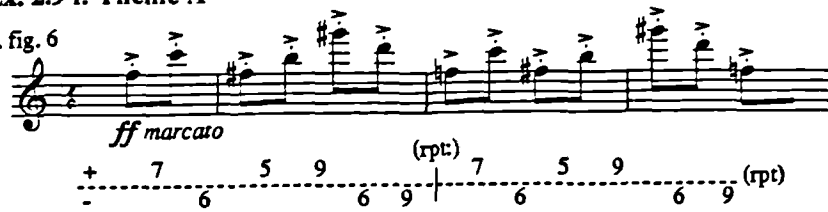
Ex. 2.9 shows both themes and the way that they are altered and combined throughout the movement. The rising and falling intervals are given alongside the music examples. While the intervals of each theme are different on every appearance, the rhythmic placement of each twist in the melody, and the patterns by which pitch areas are opened up and returned to, are what preserves the identity of each theme through all their transformations.

15 It is intriguing to note that there is one other instance in Dutilleux's oeuvre of his exploring the proliferation of a motivic idea in continuous and even rhythmic values, in the first movement of Tout un monde lointain... (1970), and there too the line, while giving the impression of constituting a single idea, actually comprises two quite distinct motivic contours.

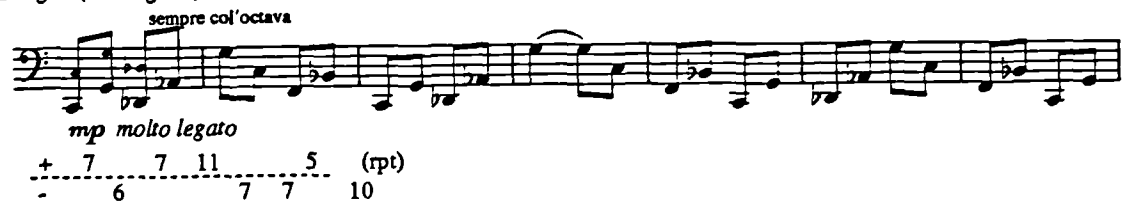
Ex. 2.9 i: Theme A

First symphony, iv.

1. fig. 6



2. fig. 9 (also fig. 10)



3. fig. 12



4. fig. 24



5. fig. 26 +4



6. fig. 28



7. fig. 29 +4



9. fig. 33

$\frac{+}{-}$ 7 7 11 5 | 7 7 11 5 7 7

fig. 37 -1

Ex. 2.9 ii: Theme B

1. fig. 11

fig. 11

p leggiero

3 3 4 3 4 5 5 3 3 5 3 3 4 3 4 2 2 2 3 3

12. fig. 39

2. fig. 39

5 6 7 11 7 7 5 8 5 6 7 11 7 7

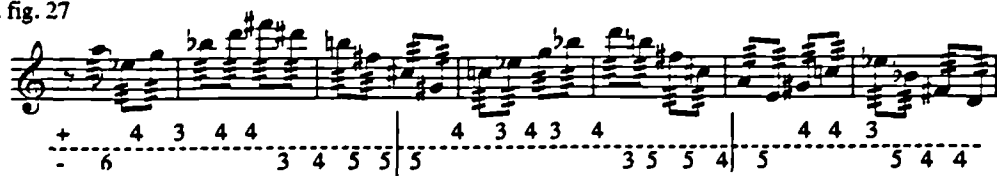
The musical notation shows two themes. Theme B is in bass clef, 2/4 time, and consists of two measures. The first measure has a half note G2 (finger 5) and a half note F2 (finger 4). The second measure has a half note E2 (finger 3) and a half note D2 (finger 3). Theme A is in bass clef, 2/4 time, and consists of two measures. The first measure has a half note C3 (finger 5), a half note B2 (finger 4), and a half note A2 (finger 3). The second measure has a half note G2 (finger 5), a half note F2 (finger 4), and a half note E2 (finger 3). The fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 below the notes.

fig. 41

Theme B

fig. 42

2. fig. 27



3. fig. 31

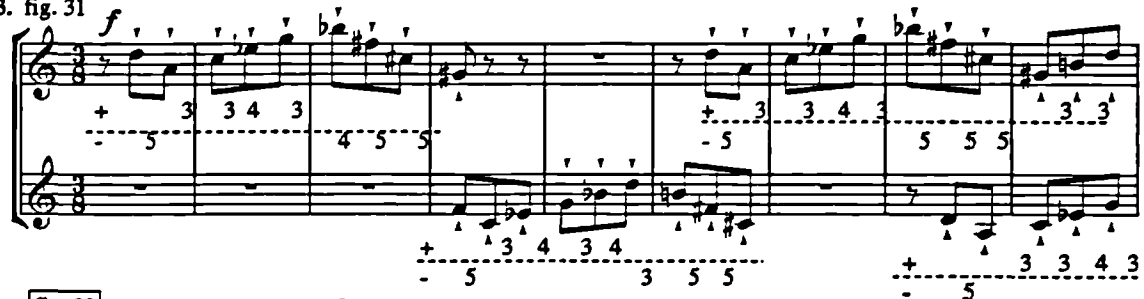
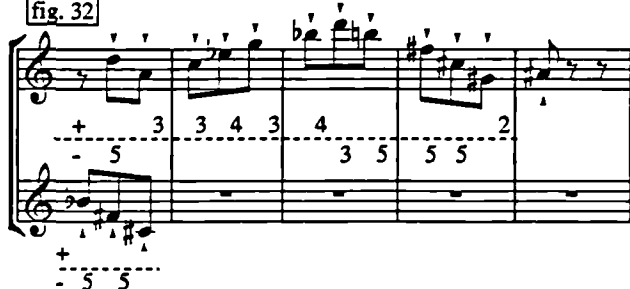


fig. 32



4. fig. 34



fig. 35

etc.
see Ex. 2.15

Theme A is also characterised by a harmonic collection from which most of its pitches are drawn: this is a symmetrical hexachord formed from the combination of three perfect fourths a semitone apart (see ex. 2.10).¹⁶

Ex. 2.10



¹⁶ In pitch-class set notation as codified by Allen Forte this hexachord is 6-Z6 (see Forte 1973: Appendix 1).

These six pitches make up the collection from which statements 7, 8, and 9 of theme A are drawn (at different transpositions). Statements 4 and 5 use a restricted form of the same collection, with one pitch (2 or 5) omitted, and the other statements use one of these two collections plus one or two additional pitches. The first statement, which is particularly short, omits both pitches 2 and 5, beginning with the four-note collection shown in

ex. 2.11.¹⁷



This tetrachord consists of symmetrically related fifths fundamental to the tritone oppositions, octatonicism and many other harmonic traits particularly characteristic of Russian and French music around the turn of the century (see, for example Taruskin 1996, I: chapter 4), including composers important in the formation of Dutilleux's own musical language such as Ravel. The tetrachord also provides the opening four notes of statements 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13 (and is included in all the other statements); making an important contribution to

17 Pc sets 5-7 and 4-9 respectively.

the theme's distinctive harmonic colouring. Dutilleux's use of the symmetrical properties of the tetrachord is restrained, however, as will be discussed below, perhaps because he was aware of the risk of cliché in such a heavily used idea.

Theme B also has a distinctive harmonic profile, which arises from its alternation of third- and fourth-based harmonies, corresponding to the melodic ascents and descents respectively. The exact point at which thirds give way to fourths varies, as do the thirds themselves (between major and minor), so that the specific intervallic content of the theme is not constant, and cannot be identified with any particular collection as theme A can; nonetheless the alternation of rising thirds and falling fourths creates a consistent identity in terms of harmony as well as contour.

One of the two harmonic elements in theme B, the collection produced by the superimposed fourths, is also heard in theme A, where its open, pentatonic sound contrasts with the more dissonant sonority of ex. 2.10. (In fact, the hexachord associated with theme A is the combination of these two tetrachords.) Presentation of the pentatonic harmony in theme A is not restricted to fourths, as in theme B, but usually includes a perfect fifth (see ex. 2.12), so that even when the two themes

coincide in terms of pitch content their thematic contours remain distinct. Only in statements 7 and 8 of theme A is there an exact thematic correspondence with a shape (x) from theme B (ex. 2.13).

Ex. 2.12



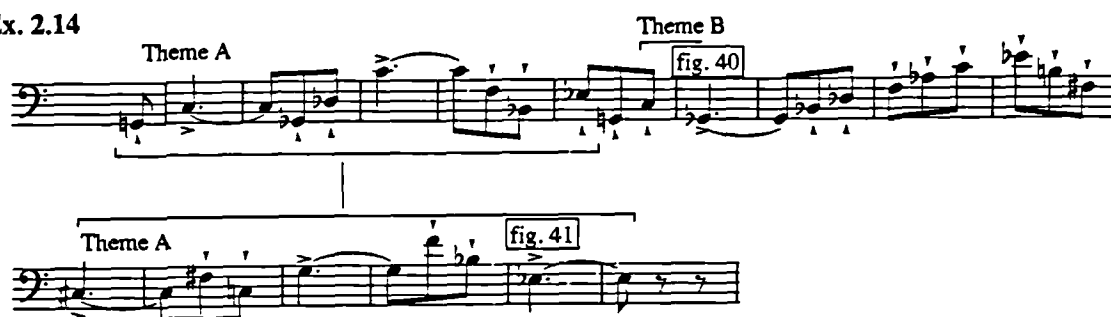
Ex. 2.13



The even rhythm of both themes runs through a variety of different metric frameworks in different parts of the movement, and when the themes are repeated in ostinato style this sometimes causes the accented downbeats to fall on different points in the melodic pattern on each repetition, as at fig. 28 (see ex. 2.9i, statement 6). The procedure here can be compared to isorhythm, with the series of durational values replaced by one of metric stresses. It is extended into a fully isorhythmic scheme at fig. 39, when for the first time the downbeats are not only stressed but lengthened, thus creating a rhythmic profile and a conventional talea. It is at this point that the two themes are, for the only time in the piece,

combined into a single melodic line. As theme A begins its third statement of the color it turns into theme B. The dovetail is neatly accomplished: although there is an overlap of only two notes between the two themes, the thirds of B are arranged so that its first seven notes include the hexachord that would have been sounded by the color of A, and in the same register (see ex. 2.14).

Ex. 2.14



In b. 6-8 of ex. 2.14 theme B moves from this tertiary harmony to a contrasted collection of fourths, and here Dutilleux uses the change in harmony to bring back A, transposed by a tritone, its lengthened notes emphasising the new relationships between the pitches of ex. 2.11 (which are the first four notes of A), now mapped onto the same pitches differently aligned in this complementary tonal area. This, as was observed above, makes use of a harmonic relationship familiar from numerous turn-of-the-century French (and Russian) composers, such as Debussy and Ravel, as well as more

recent figures like Stravinsky, Bartók and Messiaen. Though Dutilleux makes frequent use of the tetrachord and its peculiar properties, he is careful to dissolve it into the fluctuation of varied harmonic types that is more characteristic of his own style. Fig. 40 is a case in point, where theme A almost immediately undergoes new intervallic transformations and the emphasized notes C#, F# and G are set into new harmonic contexts.

The use of theme B to change the prevailing harmonic focus in this passage illustrates its dynamic quality and its tendency to 'modulate', in contrast with the relatively static theme A. Although theme A changes in terms of pitch, register, intervals and sometimes pulse and metre, these differences are only to be found by comparing one passage with another elsewhere in the piece, i.e. separated from it by other music. The immediate repetitions of the theme that are to be found within a given section, however, are not varied at all. Thus, within any one of these passages theme A functions as an ostinato, outlining and then continuing to reiterate a certain harmonic field without any further development. Its characteristic energy derives from its pattering rhythm, the constant metric realignment, and from the subtle alternation of the two tetrachords implied by the more open intervals of the tail of the theme before it

returns to the initial harmony. This last feature is essentially an elaboration of detail: in the context of the passages in which it appears, the harmonic momentum of theme A, like its metric energy, is cyclic and confined to the small scale; it does not generate the much bigger changes which can be heard on each subsequent appearance.

Theme B is similarly transformed whenever it reappears in a new section, but unlike theme A, it also develops within each of these sections. In ex. 2.15 the rate at which the theme changes is at its slowest, probably because the theme here is the dux in an augmentation canon in which the comes moves at a rate of only one note per bar; the repetitions prevent the dux from straying too far from the harmonic orbit of the comes. Even so, the harmonic and registral boundaries of the theme are gradually redefined, the ascent in thirds rising to a higher top note, and eventually transposing the beginning of the theme to a different pitch level. Where there is no rhythmic augmentation to restrict the pace of development it can be much more rapid, as in ex. 2.16, which shows the dux in a four-part canon in equal note-values.

Ex. 2.15

First symphony, iv.



Ex. 2.16

First symphony, iv.



Here theme B is at its most mobile, continuously changing its harmonic implications and its registral boundaries. In this way Dutilleux frequently uses theme B as transitional material; ex. 2.16 leads to what is probably the most clearly articulated point of arrival in the movement, with a closed harmonic progression in a new key, based on root position triads and harmonising a new melody - C - which is structured around the same triadic

itches (fig. 16). (The two other passages in the movement which are overtly transitional and lead to distinct new sections are also based melodically on theme B (figs 27 and 54).)

Section II

The new melody C which appears at fig. 16 stands in total contrast to the kind of motivic continuum examined above in themes A and B; with its definite rhythmic profile, phrase structure and harmonic support it conforms to the old-fashioned notion of a 'tune'. Although it does undergo a certain amount of intervallic alteration at fig. 18, its fixed outline is still unmistakable. It is one of the last such melodies in Dutilleux's oeuvre: after the first symphony, only the ballet score Le loup of 1953 has anything comparable, and here the two melodies in question are so closely tied in with the events on stage that Dutilleux prefers the piece not to be performed in concert form. After that work, Dutilleux's interest in 'croissance progressive' becomes paramount, and in such a context clearly signposted and rounded melodies of this kind become inappropriate. Nonetheless, Dutilleux manages to integrate it very successfully into the heterogeneous collection of motivic and harmonic materials from which this movement is fashioned.

The most telling difference between the two appearances of this melody lies not in changes to the melodic intervals, but in the contrast between the stable harmonies and rounded cadential phrases at fig. 16 and the developmental harmonies at fig. 18. In the latter passage the harmonies trace a long, rising progression over some 55 bars (up to fig. 24) which brings a sense of continuity and coherence to a passage of continual harmonic fluctuation. The progression, outlined in ex. 2.17, shows a way of developing harmony over long spans of music reminiscent of the descending and rising progressions from figs 6-10 of the passacaille.

Ex. 2.17 Harmonic progression, figs 18-23 (melody excluded)

First symphony, iv.

The musical score for Ex. 2.17 is presented in three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system is labeled 'fig. 18' and includes the annotation 'rising scale implicit in harmonies' above the treble staff. The second system is labeled 'fig. 19'. The third system is labeled 'fig. 20'. The notation shows a series of chords and melodic fragments in the right hand, while the left hand provides a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and moving lines. The key signature changes from one sharp (F#) to two sharps (F# and C#) across the systems.

Ex. 2.17 cont'd

The musical score for Ex. 2.17 cont'd consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows a treble and bass staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. Figure 21 is marked in the first measure of the treble staff, and Figure 22 is marked in the fourth measure. The second system continues the piece, with Figure 23 marked in the second measure of the treble staff. The third system shows further development of the themes, with a sustained pedal note in the bass staff and a bass ostinato in the treble staff.

Theme C is subjected to still more developmental treatment at fig. 24, when its opening motive is linked to an inversion of motive M (appearing in a more melodic context than before), and the resulting phrase set in counterpoint with theme A, augmented in crotchets.

As indicated above, the transitional passage at fig. 27 makes use of theme B in the higher register. This is only the uppermost layer in a rich texture which also comprises a sustained pedal note, a bass ostinato and descending harmonic progression. The most unusual element is provided by the upper strings playing measured glissandos in three different parts, staggered by the

interval of a semitone so as to produce a mass of sliding cluster sonorities. The texture is also overlaid by three parallel lines descending in chromatic steps in an independent rhythm in the first violins. Against the background of the brass chords, whose descending steps are distinct and each of a precise harmonic focus, such writing is more of a textural than a harmonic resource, but it is a strikingly new technique for Dutilleux, and may have been inspired by Bartók's interest in chromatic clusters, and glissandos, as a background texture (see, for example, his Music for strings, percussion and celesta, iii, fig. 35). In the final bars before fig. 28 these additional layers of descending lines fall away so that the final harmonies in the approach to the new section are not obscured.

Section III

This is the section corresponding to the scherzo, in fast 3/8 time (fig. 28). It is almost entirely taken up with themes A and B whose motivic and harmonic development has been discussed above. Near the end, however, at fig. 44, motive M reappears as a fully-fledged melodic line, and at the same time reveals its connections with a recurrent motive from the Intermezzo (see ex. 2.18). The bass-line to this passage is another stepwise progression, moving in

contrary motion to the melody and harmony.

Ex. 2.18 (i) Motive M as a melodic line

First symphony, iv.

fig. 44

(middle parts omitted)

f intense

8f sf sf sf sf sf sim.

Ex. 2.18 (ii)

First symphony, iii, fig. 9.

Lento

fig. 9

mp mf

Section IV

Motive M now returns to its earlier role as a means of providing harmonic continuity, and is no longer heard as a clearly articulated melodic motive. The rich and varied chord progression from fig. 47 to fig. 54 is governed throughout by two patterns: one is the kind of oscillation first encountered at fig. 6 in the passacaille, in which each chord is divided into upper and lower bands which move to and fro in contrary motion, and the other is

motive M, whose alternating steps guide the overall course of both halves of the chords. Themes A and B continue to be heard, but more as background texture than as melodies, and at fig. 49 the 'theme' (T), not heard for over 200 bars, reappears and is combined both with itself and reminiscences of theme C in a slow decrescendo, which culminates in a reworking of the transitional passage heard at the end of section II above (fig. 54; c.f. fig. 27).

Section V

In the coda, unusually, a new theme is introduced (D; see ex. 2.19). Chromatic steps in alternate directions give it a resemblance to motive M in inversion, but the closest precursor is theme B from the passacaille.

Ex. 2.19 Theme D

fig. 55

First symphony, iv, fig. 55.

Lento

p dim. *pp* *poco*

The new theme is combined with C and extended so as to end with the first three notes of the 'theme' T, and in this way the symphony comes to its quiet close. Formally this movement, and the coda in particular, makes a greatly more individual solution to the 'finale problem' than that of the piano sonata, with its heroic peroration.

The tonality of the movement comes to rest on a root position Db major triad, recalling the C# major/minor chords at the opening of the movement. Between these two extreme points, however, C#/Db as a centre of harmonic focus is notable for its absence, just as the 'theme' of the variations is also neglected for the larger part of the movement. The long passage of harmonic stability from fig. 55 which gives the coda its quality of calm and resolution is built on an E minor seventh chord over a B bass, the same harmony which opened section III (following on from the same transitional passage which leads into both sections III and V). The triads which form the basis of the last four harmonies (E minor 7th - Bb minor 7th - G major added-sixth - Db major; fig. 59 +1 to the end) reveal another typically octatonic progression disguised by freely chromatic writing in the melody and some inner voices. The final return to the Db major harmony suggested in the movement's opening fortissimo chords is reserved for the very last chord.

As the paragraphs above have shown, both in form and character the finale con variazione is an unconventional movement, not easily accounted for in terms of any one traditional genre, and certainly not a 'theme and variations' any more than it is monothematic. Its themes and motivic ideas represent a wide variety of different kinds of compositional material, ranging from the fully individuated melody C to the motivic fragment which is theme T and the continually varying themes A and B. Its overall form is conceived as a succession of large sections in different tempos and metres, based on a mixture of new thematic material and motivic reworkings: as such it points forward to later works such as Timbres, espace, mouvement.

Second symphony 'Le double'

On receiving the commission for a second symphony from Charles Munch and the Koussevitsky foundation in 1955, Dutilleux's first concern was to find a new approach to the genre, so as to be certain not to replicate the first symphony (Dutilleux 1993: 97; Roy 1962: 418). What finally enabled him to start work in earnest was the idea of dividing the orchestra into two similar but unequal

18
groups: although the orchestra of soloists might at times confront or enter into dialogue with the full orchestra, what he particularly wished to explore were other more ambiguous possibilities: gradually blending the two together, or superimposing different ideas simultaneously (Roy 1962: 418). The different quality of sound and texture between the two groups, with their different spatial positioning, was another field of potential ambiguities which appealed to him, and it was notions such as these which prompted the work's subtitle Le double (Dutilleux 1993: 98-9).

Critical reception

After its première in Boston in December 1959 the work was given on both sides of the Atlantic by a wide variety of orchestras; its reception was generally very warm, although there were critics in New York who took a dislike to the modernity of its language (Dutilleux 1993: 100). More typically, discussions of the first performances praised Dutilleux's ability to synthesise and unify his material, and to conjure magical and poetic associations from precise and straightforward musical ideas (see, for

18 Even at this stage, he still had misgivings about writing a symphony, and toyed with the title 'Concerto for two orchestras' (Mari 1973: 73; see also Potter 1997: 147).

example, the reviews by Max Pinchard, Marcel Schneider and Bernard Gavoty, as well as Jean Roy's own discussion, in Roy 1962: 418-21, and also Antoine Goléa cited on p. 108 above). The later accounts by Mari and Humbert applaud the work in similar terms; their analytical comments are considered together with Caroline Potter's in the case studies of movements i and ii at the end of this chapter.

Musical language

In most respects the musical language of the second symphony is continuous with that of the first, and the more detailed account of its general features given with reference to the earlier work on pp. 113-8 above can be taken to apply here too, allowing for Dutilleux's gradual shedding of the more conservative elements over the intervening years (a process which was to continue for at least another decade after the completion of Le double). Thus, while much the same composers may be felt to stand behind both symphonies, one can note that the occasional passages in the first which sounded like Dukas or Debussy (in the scherzo) or Prokofiev (e.g. theme C in the finale)¹⁹ have no parallels in the second. At the same time, some

¹⁹ Humbert has observed resemblances to L'apprenti sorcier in the treatment of the main theme in the scherzo, some of whose lyrical episodes also recall passages from Debussy's Jeux (Humbert 1985: 46).

of the more shocking sonorities from Stravinsky's Sacre are beginning to be absorbed into Dutilleux's language (compare, for example, the brass and timpani writing at the Più vivo after fig. 30 in the second symphony's finale, and fig. 174ff in Le sacre). The slow, chorale-like succession of wide-spaced, diatonic chords which create harmonic and rhythmic stasis in the coda to the finale is a formal gesture typical of Stravinsky (as in the endings to the Symphonies of wind instruments and the Symphony in C, for example), but Dutilleux unobtrusively weaves into it reminiscences of other material in a manner distinctly his own (and closer to the ending of his own first symphony than to anything by Stravinsky).

The second symphony is probably Dutilleux's most richly and freely contrapuntal work, with the consequence that harmonic combinations are particularly varied, and simple triads quite rare.²⁰ Tonal focus is still clearly

20 The more 'progressive' approach to elements of language and form shown by the second symphony in comparison to the first is illustrated by the difficulties Dutilleux had with the final chord. Like the first symphony, which concludes on a Db major triad, the second originally ended on a pure triad of C# major: a sonority related to the opening of the finale, but not itself heard at any stage during the movement. Though this ending was performed, published and recorded, Dutilleux was 'never satisfied' with it, and ten years after the premiere he changed the last chord, overlaying the C# major triad with more dissonant elements in the higher registers (see Humbert

continued overleaf

implied in many sections, however, but with emphasis falling on a single pitch rather than a triad, even where triads are in play. Pedal-points abound throughout, and Dutilleux makes roughly equal use of them in the bass and in the treble, where they lend coherence to otherwise freely evolving harmonic sequences (see, for example, figs 30-2 in the Animato and fig. 2 +2 to fig. 3 in the Andantino). In this way, harmonies conceived from the top down, introduced in the first symphony, are now used in much the same way as the (often equally free) harmonies built up from a fixed, or thematic bass-note; sometimes there are pedal points at both registral extremes, with changing harmonies suspended between the two.

Given the balance between opposed registers in the use of high and low pedal-points, it is not surprising that Dutilleux also begins to explore a tonal focus at the centre of the texture, produced by the symmetry of the lines above and below. The effect of 'harmonic structures which radiate out from either side of a central axis in

21 cont'd.

1985: 88). To an extent, this change reflects the changes in Dutilleux's thinking between 1959 and 1970, of course, but the fact that he was unsatisfied with the effect of the triad in relation to the rest of the second symphony, while remaining satisfied with the effect of a similar triad at the end of the first, suggests that the change is intended to reflect a general tendency in the language of the later work.

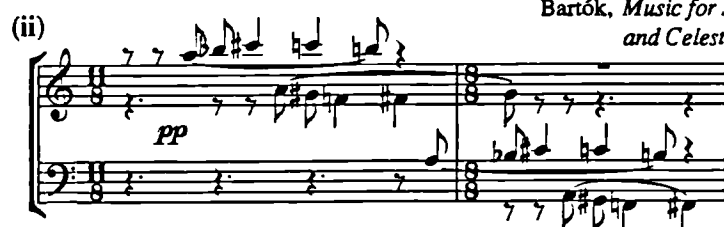
reflecting intervals' is that 'attention is forced into the axial middle, because all relationships converge there: the sounds point to it' (Harvey 1982: 2). This pitch 'centricity', which may have been suggested to Dutilleux through his familiarity with Bartók's music (see ex. 2.20), is again used in very much the same flexible way as the pitch emphases in bass and treble, and interleaved with them.

Ex. 2.20 Pitch focus as the centre of a symmetrical contour

Second symphony, i, fig. 32 +4



Bartók, *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, i, b.82-3.



It is perhaps surprising, in view of the freely chromatic writing which characterises much of this work, that within certain limited passages the strict use of octatonic collections is again prominent, and structurally important, to an extent not seen in Dutilleux's music since the oboe sonata; the role of octatonic collections in the first movement is discussed below.

With regard to motivic writing, complete, self-contained melodies such as 'C' from the first symphony's finale have been left behind, but the second symphony continues to embrace a number of distinct themes while weaving around them a web of proliferation and derivation which links them together. As an attempt to develop a musical correlative to the dense web of allusion and reminiscence explored by Proust, which Dutilleux greatly admires and has long regarded as an inspiration for his music,²¹ the second symphony remains one of the composer's most impressive achievements.

While in the first symphony Dutilleux rejected sonata structure, as a way of avoiding a polarised bithematicism which could become cumbersome and predictable, by the time of the second his command of thematic proliferation is so sure that this no longer presents a real danger. Although the composer prefers not to discuss them in these terms, the first two movements of Le double show affinities to different aspects of sonata form, without in any way returning to the inflexible procedures he had renounced in

21 See Dutilleux 1993: 102-4; the connections between Dutilleux and Proust are further explored in my article Correspondances: Dutilleux, Baudelaire and Proust (Thurlow 1997: 71-91), which is submitted together with the present thesis as supplementary material.

1950. What these affinities are, and how the motivic and harmonic ambiguities of Dutilleux's proliferating counterpoint can articulate a clear formal structure, are the questions which will be addressed in the two case studies which end this chapter.

First movement (Animato ma misterioso)

This is a large movement in a brisk 3/4 tempo, whose discursive style and rhythmic consistency immediately invoke the character of a sonata allegro. The structure of the movement is not so easy to discern, however. Although certain themes and formal landmarks are clearly articulated, the continually shifting relationships between them, as well as matters of key, texture and the play of space and style between the large and small orchestras, make the form of the movement as a whole resemble a labyrinth, and pose a special challenge to the analyst.

Previous analytical approaches: Mari, Humbert and Potter

Pierrette Mari begins her account by stating that the movement is built from a single theme which emerges as the movement progresses, and goes on to suggest ten numbered sections into which it can be divided (1973: 167-171). Leaving aside the first question for the moment, the ten

sections are certainly helpful in identifying some striking landmarks, including different themes and changes of texture. But as an interpretation of structure they appear rather arbitrary, embracing an inconsistent mixture of very large sections (comprising numerous subsidiary passages) and other much shorter sections which are more comparable in scale and content with the subsidiary passages than with the large sections they are ranked alongside.²² Her comments on the different sections are essentially descriptive, and do not seem to support her theory of a single, gradually emerging basic theme, or to indicate any other formal principles underlying the movement's structure.

Humbert has risen to this challenge, and his analysis is prefaced with a summary which divides the movement into five sections plus a coda; moreover, the sections are named 'exposition, development, recapitulation' and so on, helping to interpret their function and relationship one to another (Humbert 1985: 63). Though the segments are very unequal - the 'second development' (fig. 13 +6 - fig.

22 The first section, for example, is particularly long (86 bars) and rides over a clear moment of structural articulation at b. 40, while many of the other sections are less than a quarter of that length. No. IX is so short and slight that it hardly seems worth differentiating from no. X (figs 39 and 40 respectively).

32) is almost as long as all the others put together, for example - there is a clear rationale, largely determined by recurrences of the gesture heard at the very beginning of the work (Humbert's 'exposition') on the clarinet. This figure swoops up to a sustained $b\sharp^1$, a note treated as central to the harmonies and melodies of the movement; whenever it recurs and articulates b^1 Humbert designates that section a 'recapitulation'. Other sections are 'developments', including the second section where the clarinet figure features prominently but (for the only time in the movement) emphasises a different pitch: e^2 .

This approach reflects an awareness of the interaction between motive and harmony as a criterion for formal organisation, at least in respect of this particular motive, but it does not always correspond so well to the use of the other two main motives, which are much more predominant in the movement as a whole. Though I am not convinced by Humbert's first 'development' section, nor by the primacy of the clarinet motive as a signpost to the movement's form, there are some valuable general points to be drawn from his analysis. Firstly, he finds the movement amenable to the terminology of sonata form. Given the composer's declared aversion to this formal model, this is not an obvious conclusion, but it proves to be helpful. Secondly, his scheme suggests a

concentration of 'developmental' music at the centre of the movement; provided that it is specified how such music differs from the reworking of motives which pervades most of the symphony, the notion is one which can offer an insight into the structure of the movement. Similar conclusions can be drawn from Caroline Potter's analysis, which sees vestiges of sonata-form structure implied by the recurrences of the clarinet theme and the use of pivot notes: an absence of both these features in the middle of the movement again suggests a central 'development section' (1997: 107).

Fluidity of texture, harmony and thematic writing and Dutilleux's cultivation of the art of transition make it inappropriate to insist on a single exclusive categorisation of this movement. In the analysis which follows my aim is to explore the way in which Dutilleux plays with some of the principles of the sonata style while furthering the flexibility and apparent spontaneity of his musical language. Brief indications are also given of Mari's and Humbert's schemas, for comparison.

Motivic material

The opening bars present a number of contrasted ideas in quick succession: the three-note timpani signal, the rising clarinet figure mentioned above, a pianissimo chord

played twice, whose top line takes up the note B from the clarinet, and finally a melodic figure, which starts from B and quickly develops from two notes to five, as shown in ex. 2.21 below. After this figure has been elaborated contrapuntally for only a few bars, another melodic idea is introduced on the harpsichord at fig. 3.

Ex. 2.21 Principal motives

(i) **Animato, ma misterioso** Second symphony, i, b. 1-5

(ii) **Theme X**

(iii) **Theme Y: first appearance**

(iv) **Theme Y: later variant**

The derivation of the first three notes of the harpsichord melody (Y) from the timpani signal (y) is clear, and in later reworkings of Y the resemblance becomes exact in rhythm and intervals (see ex. 2.21iv).

But, as with the first symphony's finale, it is hard to accept Mari's assertion that all the ideas of the movement develop from a single theme (Mari 1973: 167). Humbert does at least acknowledge that the monothematic thesis needs a little explaining, and suggests that X is a variation of Y (Humbert 1985: 64). Although his explanation of this relation is somewhat confusing, it is possible to show that the two melodic ideas do have a characteristic three-note cell in common (see ex. 2.22).

Ex. 2.22

The musical notation for Ex. 2.22 is presented on a grand staff with two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Theme X' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Theme Y'. Theme X consists of a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Theme Y consists of: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Below the staves, the three-note cells are identified: '0 4 1' for Theme X and '0 1 4' for Theme Y. The 'inverted' versions of these cells are also shown, with the notes G4, F#4, E4 for Theme X and G4, F#4, E4 for Theme Y.

Nonetheless, these two motives remain distinctly characterised through all their subsequent metamorphoses, as do the clarinet figure (cl) and the chords (ch). As suggested earlier, the monothematic argument is most illuminating if understood as referring not so much to the thematic working of the movement as to the continuity of its form. Between them, the various ideas shown in ex. 2.20 provide the material for almost all of the musical argument. Though there are some variants of X and Y which

become individually characterised in their own right (see ex. 2.23 below), their origins in one or other of these themes is made clear in the music, and in fact only one important new idea is introduced in the remaining nine-tenths of the movement (at fig. 16). These opening bars, then, are concerned with bringing the ideas for the movement into play, and not with creating a polarity of contrasting formal areas. Seen in this sense, the movement can be reconciled to its 'monothematic' description, and justifies it far better than the finale of the first symphony, which continues to bring in new material, sometimes in sections which contrast in texture and tonality, throughout its length.

It should be noted that the fragments shown in ex. 2.21 have different functions in the music. X and Y are subject to almost continuous development, and their ongoing presence in the musical discourse, together with their continuing growth and alteration, mean that a statement of either does not stand out as a landmark in the form, nor is it easy to distinguish between development and the 'original' form of these ideas. The clarinet figure (cl) does not function in the same way, however. Although the first note and the exact pitch content of this rising figure vary, the gesture remains essentially the same, and is almost unvaried in its

scoring, (solo clarinet, occasionally bassoon) and the pitch of its emphatic final note (e" between figs 4 and 6, otherwise b' throughout). Furthermore, it only appears in the music at particular moments, and does not, like X and Y, become part of the basic material of the music's continuity, remaining essentially independent in its contour and rhythm.

The 'timpani-figure' (y) clearly relates to the general motivic development, but also preserves a particular individuality when kept to variations on this three-note head-motif, usually confined to the timpani. The one notable exception is the statement by the whole orchestra in octaves immediately before fig. 10, which nevertheless specifically recalls the opening timpani signal rather than contributing to the ongoing reworkings of motive Y. The two chords shown in ex. 2.21i (ch) also stand distinct from the normal (and frequently contrapuntal) continuity established in this movement, but their reappearances are far from unvaried; rather, their development is concentrated exclusively in terms of harmony (preserving only the top note B throughout) and, above all, texture. It is important to understand the different parameters of consistency and of change in these initial ideas, and the different ways in which they relate to the continuity of the whole and the articulation of

different sections, before beginning to seek any organising patterns or underlying principles.

Towards an underlying structural principle

If the movement is approached in terms of the relatively small sections such as those proposed by Mari, it can be divided up readily enough; I would propose the twelve sections shown in Table 2.3 below. However, I also suggest that there is a broader scheme underlying this succession of small sections, which can best be seen by examining the harmony, and, in particular, chordal successions which are anchored to a sustained pitch, whether in the bass, the top line, or at the centre of a symmetrical pitch structure (as discussed on p. 163-4 above).

In this movement the pitch emphasis on B is very predominant, as Table 2.3 shows, and indeed there are only two areas of sustained harmonic focus on other centres. The table also indicates the distribution of motives throughout the movement, from which they can be seen to fall into two groups.

Table 2.3 Formal plan of Animato ma misterioso
(first movement, second symphony).

Section	Fig.	Harmonic focus	Motives (other than X or Y)	Mar's analysis	Humbert's analysis
I	(beginning)	B	y (timp.), cl, chords X, Y	I	Exposition
II	5 -3	e" over C# ma. 6/4	y (timp.), cl, Y, X fig 10: y (tutti. <i>ff</i>)		Development (fig 5-1)
III	10 +5	B	y, cl, X, Y.	II	Recapitulation
IV	13 +4		X'		2nd Dvpmt (fig 13 -6)
V	16		Z, X'', Y'		
VI	22		X''', X''', Y augmented	III	
VII	24	D	y, X''', Y augmented	IV	
VIII	27	B	X''', Y'	V	
IX	30 +4	B	chords	VI	
X	32	B	cl.	VII	2nd Recapitulation (fig 32 -3)
XI	34	B	chords, cl.	VIII	
				IX (fig. 39)	Coda
XII	40	B	y, X'''	X	

One group includes the timpani signal y, the clarinet figure (cl) the chords (ch) and themes X and Y, which are heard in sections I, II, III, and then in sections VII, IX, X, XI, XII. The other group comprises relatively contrasting material, such as the vigorously developmental

treatment of the new idea Z at fig. 16, and also themes like X' and Y' which, though related to X and Y, can be distinguished from more subtle variants because they establish and then consistently maintain a new rhythmic or intervallic profile: this group occurs in sections IV - VIII and its themes are shown in ex. 2.23. A broad ternary pattern emerges from the deployment of these thematic ideas, which corresponds to the harmonic scheme: where the central section is harmonically restless and 'developmental' the outer sections are mostly focused on B.

Ex. 2.23 Other first movement themes

Second symphony, i, fig. 13 +4

(i) theme X'

fig. 14



(ii) theme X'' and theme Z

fig. 16



(iii) theme Y'

fig. 20



(iv) themes X''' and X''''

fig. 22



Charles Rosen has suggested that in many twentieth-century works sonata form has become almost synonymous with a freely varied ternary design, since in a more chromatic and tonally fluid harmonic language the division between first and second groups takes on a less axiomatic role in the form (Rosen 1980: 403). The present movement offers an unusual example of this phenomenon, in that tonal variety in the exposition is not merely weak but has been dissociated from the two main subjects and reduced to a small-scale contrast (section II) whose resolution follows straight away (in section III). Nonetheless, it is more than a ternary design pure and simple, not only because of the discursive treatment of the two main themes, but more particularly because the sections corresponding to the rest of the traditional sonata form - the development, recapitulation and coda - retain the characteristics of the model much more clearly. Table 2.4 shows how this sonata model relates to the sections shown above.

Table 2.4 Formal plan of *Animato ma misterioso*
(first movement, second symphony),
with sonata structure.

Section	Fig.	Harmonic focus	Sonata structure	Mari's analysis	Humbert's analysis	Potter's analysis
I	(beginning)	B (with oct. hm.)	Exposition	I	Exposition	pivot-nt B (Expos.?)
II	5 -3	e" over C# ma. 6/4 (oct.)			Development (fig. 5 -1)	pivot-nt E
III	10 +5	B (with oct. hm.)		II	Recapitulation	pivot-nt B
IV	13 +4		Development		2nd Dvypmt (fig. 13 -6)	(Devpmt?) (fig. 12 -1)
V	16					(no pivot)
VI	22			III		
VII	24	D (oct.)	(Retransition)	IV		
VIII	27	B	Recapitulation	V		
IX	30 +4	B		VI		pivot-nt B (Recap.?)
X	32	B		VII	2nd Recapitulation (fig. 32 -3)	
XI	34	B		VIII		
				IX (fig. 39)	Coda	
XII	40	B	Coda	X		

The development section

Both at the beginning and end of what I shall refer to as the development section (IV - VII), the transition from the tonally more stable outer sections is very smooth. The cessation of pitch focus on B between figs 12 and 13 is only identifiable after the event, and in terms of motive

and harmony the following passage develops gradually, opening up a new harmonic area as the rising figure X' is reflected with a series of descending bass-notes. It is only when this crescendo culminates in the fugato on a new theme (Z) at fig. 16 that the contrast with the exposition becomes dramatic, however. Though the bass-line in this section tends to reiterate the three notes of Z for bars at a time, as do subsequent statements of this theme, the overlapping of entries and continual development of a countersubject derived from X (X") ensure that no part of the counterpoint or its resultant harmonies ever remain fixed for long.

The counterpoint of two new and equally individual derivatives of X which follows is also unsettled harmonically, although the much less hectic texture and the steady progress of Y in a slower tempo prepare the way for the unison D on which all lines converge at fig. 24. The same motivic ideas are kept in play while the D, reiterated as a pedal at the top and the bottom of the texture, provides a still centre of harmonic reference. The pitch centre changes from D to B almost by stealth, appearing in the bass to the suggestive sound of quiet timpani. After a climax based on polyrhythmic combinations of Y' (figs 29-30), theme B stabilises the top line as the chords from the opening of the work (ch)

reappear in what is the most concentrated exploration of timbral and spatial transformation in the movement (from fig. 30+4). They are brought to a close by the clarinet motive (cl) at fig. 32, by which stage the recapitulation is firmly under way.

The latter stages of the development section are thus dedicated to a long and very gradual reintroduction of the most characteristic elements of the exposition. Section VII in particular may be heard as a kind of 'retransition': though a dominant pedal would clearly be inappropriate in the context, the underlying stillness and focus of the upper and lower pedals here certainly act as a bridge to the return and increasing sureness of the main harmonic focus on B. The choice of D for this transitional pedal note connects with the opening timpani figure, and the use throughout the opening section of the movement of an octatonic collection.

Octatonic writing in the exposition

To return to the opening bars again, each timpani phrase ends not on B, like the clarinet figure and the chords which follow, but on d. In fact all of these ideas are drawn from an octatonic collection, and as Humbert comments, the clarinet's rising phrase 'leaves in the mind

the aural image of a diminished-seventh chord'.²³ This collection, and particularly the harmonies drawn from it which emphasise B and D (like the chords *ch*) or the diminished triad B-D-F outlined by the timpani, establish the tonal/harmonic field in which B is predominant in the opening section. Though theme X weakens the octatonic focus with its two semitone steps *b-c-c#*, theme Y and the canonic imitations which follow reassert it again at fig. 3. The contrasting tonal area of section II, (b. 40) based on a C# major/minor chord, derives from the same octatonic collection, but emphasises harmonies complementary to B and D; the new version of Y given by the oboe at fig. 6 follows these same harmonic principles.

When X appears thickened by string chords at fig. 7, Humbert comments that 'the harmonies follow one another without any concern for tonal function'.²⁴ But the complex and possibly ad hoc changes from one chord to the next are subsumed within a simpler and larger continuity provided by the bass-line (not quoted in Humbert's music example). This line, in which the timpani are joined by other bass instruments, continues to emphasise the C#

23 '...qui laisse dans l'esprit l'image auditive d'un accord de 7ème diminuée' (Humbert 1985: 63).

24 'Les harmonies se succèdent sans souci de fonction tonale' (Humbert 1985: 70).

major/minor harmony while the upper chords move freely. Only when the upper line arrives back on its original pitch in this harmony, e", does the bass-line then match the increasing intensity of dynamics and contour with a more chromatic set of pitches. The passage culminates in the tutti outburst at b. 80 which reestablishes the F and D of the opening timpani figure, and ushers in the return of B announced by the clarinet motive at the beginning of section III. Here, as at b. 29, canonic imitations of Y reinforce the original focus of the collection on B and its diminished triad.

This octatonic emphasis, despite the freedom which is brought into the writing, principally by the non-octatonic theme X, is another factor which links together the first three sections as an 'exposition' of harmonic as well as thematic ideas. Octatonic writing is absent from sections IV, V and VI. But, as shown in table 2.4 above, it reappears in section VII, in the augmented statement of Y (together with the chords which accompany it) over y in the timpani, which provides the cue for substituting D as the temporary pitch focus; in this way section VII works out one of the ambiguities of the harmony of the opening bars, and at the same time serves to reintroduce the harmonic collection of the exposition without actually pre-empting the central role of B from section VIII

onwards. Part of its function, therefore, is analogous to the harmonic preparation characteristic of a traditional 'retransition' section, where the development makes way for the return of the opening tonality and material.

Recapitulation

Following the criteria outlined above, with respect to motives, pitch focus and octatonic writing, sections VIII-XI correspond well to the idea of a recapitulation, not least in the way that material from the exposition is subtly reinterpreted in the context of the different tonal function of the recapitulation. In the exposition the clarinet figure functioned as an anacrusis, and by analogy so did the timpani figure y, always appearing in the last few bars before the beginning of some new idea or the move to a new harmonic area; the more substantial themes X and Y were quickly introduced. The recapitulation reverses this relationship and replaces the energetic and expansive development of ideas in the exposition with a gradual process of decreasing rhythmic energy, consolidating the tonal focus on B. Thus, the more excited and unstable developments are worked out in the earlier sections (e.g. the climax at fig. 30), and the clarinet's repeated cadences on B then lead to clear statements of X and Y in the later sections. Even these statements show a

complementary relationship to the exposition: at figs 32-4 theme X appears in the imitative texture that was originally developed with theme Y at fig. 11. From fig. 34 onwards the chords (ch), which now play a far larger part than in the exposition, lend a 'quasi-subdominant' colour to the harmony with a progression of descending bass triads - E, C, Ab.

The final section (XII) functions as a coda, in which material from the retransition section VII reappears in a harmonic context now dominated by B in both the lowest and highest lines; the shift is acted out in miniature by the timpani as they move from the d associated with this material before, at section VII, to B (fig. 40). The tonal focus of the movement has been one of single pitches, pedal notes, rather than of B major or minor triads, and the final chord is ambivalent, enriching the upper and lower Bs with quite different harmonies. What is perhaps unique about the movement is the way that it strictly observes the metric and rhythmic clarity of a sonata allegro, with all the busy-ness and chattering passage-work of so much twentieth-century neo-classical music, and yet concentrates throughout on using this language to suggest mysterious ambiguities of texture, pace, tonality which might have drawn from a less imaginative composer a more vague, leisurely and

impressionistic approach. This movement evokes a sense of mystery by means of clarity and precision, and this basic dichotomy is indicated from the very beginning, in the tempo marking: animato ma misterioso.

Second movement (Andantino)

The lyrical and often emotionally expressive character of the Andantino stands in contrast to the brisk rhythms of the outer movements. Compared to the first, the second movement is even more seamless in the development and ramification of its sinuous lines, and, at the same time, even clearer in the articulation of decisive structural moments. As in the first movement, the clearly defined character of the different sections does not detract from the ambiguous and elusive nature of the overall form. Again, I would suggest that there is a relation to the model provided by sonata form; interestingly, however, the sonata characteristics present here are almost exactly complementary to those explored in the Animato. Whereas the first movement had a very strong and consistent harmonic focus on one pitch, the second is far less clearly governed by one overall tonal focus; it does, however, articulate certain moments with a very strong emphasis on particular pitches and chords, and restate them later on transposed to a new pitch level, as in a

recapitulation. And although much of the texture throughout the movement is motivically developmental, there is no central contrasting section, no sign of the ternary design underlying the sonata sections of the first movement. The model here is rather that of a 'sonata-form without development', typical of slow movements, in which the recapitulation almost immediately succeeds the end of the exposition.

As before, Mari divides the movement into numbered sections, while Humbert offers sonata-style descriptions (Mari 1973: 171; Humbert 1985: 73). Caroline Potter's brief analysis is more interesting, looking beyond the bar-to bar succession of events and identifying some of the underlying factors in the movement's shape and character, including the use of pivot notes and scoring, and the close relationship between the second and third of her four sections (1997: 108-10). In Table 2.5 below I suggest seven sections, but understand these to enact a larger process based on various large-scale repetitions and transpositions (i.e. recapitulations), as indicated in Table 2.6. The longest of these passages is very noticeable, as it presents some of the most sharply characterised material of the movement (for example, the striking chord which marks a change in the prevailing harmony and the first entry of the wind, at fig. 3) and

all of this material recurs in the same order in the corresponding passage later on. In this way, sections II and III.i are recapitulated a minor third higher as sections IV and V; apart from the transposition, perhaps the most significant change is the diminution of the later section by speeding up two of its themes (from quavers into semiquavers and 6/8 triplets). There is an overall reversal of the order of the two large groups of material from the exposition in the ^{recapitulation}, however, for the other, less obvious correspondence is between the second part of the introductory section (I.ii), preceding the above passage, and section VI which follows it in the recapitulation. The series of different harmonisations of the sustained f#' in the top line which occurs in I.ii is exactly repeated (at the same pitch) in VI, but disguised by the woodwind arabesques which now decorate it. Section VII fulfils several roles: it gradually unwinds the contrapuntal web so that the movement ends as it began which a single line linking it, by motivic association, to the adjacent movement, and returns to the dark string textures of the opening, transforming them into the increasingly light sonorities at the end. There is thus a symmetry to the sonata design which belies the impression of continual growth given by the extremely fluid and digressive melodic writing.

Despite the lack of tonal focus in both the opening and closing sections, in the movement as a whole the most persistent point of reference is F#. As in the first movement, this is as often achieved through pitch focus in the upper registers as through harmonic rooting in the bass. Equally important, however, is the symmetrical disposition of the other main focal points: Eb and A, whose minor-third transpositions suggest a residual octatonic scheme, even though the continual chromatic elaboration of the melodic lines precludes any extended instances of pure octatonicism. Thematic ideas mentioned in Table 2.5 are shown in ex. 2.24.

Ex. 2.24 (i)

Andantino sostenuto

Theme X* in retrograde inversion *pp* solo Theme X* in inversion Second symphony, ii, b. 1-4

* Theme X from first movement; see Ex. 2.21ii

(ii) Chord W and theme A

fig. 3

Chord W Theme A

(iii) Anticipation of opening of third movement



Second symphony, ii, last four bars. (c.f. iii, b. 1-2)

solo *p*

Table 2.5 Formal plan of Andante (second movement, second symphony).

Section	Fig.	Description	Mari's analysis	Humbert's analysis	Potter's analysis
I.i	(beginning)	Strings and timp.: reminiscence of X from first movement	I	Introduction (reminiscence of first movement)	I
I.ii	2	varied harmonisations of f#'			
II.i	3	Wind enters; chord W over C# bass; theme A in reeds centred on f#''	II	Exposition, part I	II
II.ii	4	gb' pivot-note (with lower pivot eb') theme A'		Exposition, part II	
III.i	5	bass ostinato on Eb; theme A' proliferates around pitch f#; slower cantabile added (bsn; ob.; vln; trpt.)	III	Development	
III.ii	7	melodic centre from f#'' to a' for 2 bars (bass ost. still on Eb) fig. 7 +3: bass to F#' pedal			
IV.i	9	Climax: material as in section II.i (transposed up by a minor third) theme A in semiquavers		Recapitulation	III.i (transition)
IV.ii	11	As section II.ii: pivot-note a' (with lower pivot f#') theme A' now in 6/8 quavers			III.ii
V	14	Bass ostinato on Eb (for 3 bars) melodic centre on a' trpt melody combines with approach (as at fig. 2) into:			
VI	16	Varied harmonisations of f#' (as in section I.ii) building to a climax on octave As			
VII	17	Strings/timp. scoring as in section I rising in register and ending with new variant of A (which is then taken up as the initial motive of the 3rd movement)	IV	Returns to strings, introduces motive of 3rd mvt	IV (transition)

Table 2.6 Formal plan of *Andante* (second movement, second symphony), with symmetry and sonata structure.

Section	Fig.	Sonata structure	Brief description	Symmetries
I.i	(beginning)	Exposition	Strings / timp.: motive from previous mvt	
I.ii	2		f# harmonies	
II.i	3		Chord W, theme A	
II.ii	4		pivot gb' (with eb')	
III.i	5		Bass ostinato around Eb	
III.ii	7		melody to a'; bass to F#	
IV.i	9	Recapitulation	Chord W, theme A	
IV.ii	11		pivot a' (with f#)	
V	14		Bass ostinato around Eb	
VI	16		f# harmonies	
VII	17		Strings / timp.: motive for next mvt	

Conclusion

With his two symphonies, Dutilleux moved onto a different level from the works of the 1940s, both in terms of his reputation, which became firmly international, and in terms of his own compositional development, establishing the secure grasp of large-scale form and of the orchestral medium which became a dominant characteristic of his mature work. Although the first marks a deliberate

departure from the sonata-form model which he had used in his chamber music, in the second his language is sufficiently personal and fluid for him to be able to incorporate aspects of sonata design into the first two movements without any loss of individuality or apparent freedom in the formal design. Despite the change in Dutilleux's style which was to follow the completion of the second symphony, and which causes both symphonies to appear relatively conservative by comparison with his later music, particularly in their clear-cut rhythms, they remain highly coherent, imaginative and satisfying works in their own right.

Chapter 3

New explorations:The orchestral music of the 1960s.Introduction

Orchestral music remained at the centre of Dutilleux's oeuvre during the 1960s, which, as in the previous decade, is dominated by two large works written approximately five years apart: Métaboles (1962-4) and Tout un monde lointain... (1967-70). These pieces mark a change in approach from the preceding symphonies, characterised by a more strictly controlled and self-conscious compositional technique, together with a further reduction in the more traditional elements of his style. These newly disciplined organising strategies, and the way Dutilleux uses them to produce two distinctive and expressive works of art, form the subject of this chapter.

After a brief summary of the biographical background, I examine the musical language developed by Dutilleux during these years, with an emphasis on elements which are less traditional, more deliberately constructed, and more concentrated. These include cyclic and symmetrical five-movement schemes, a greater consistency in the intervallic and pitch content of harmonic progressions, a tighter

control of motivic development which includes the use of serial procedures, and a more systematic exploration of extremes of texture.

The two main works are then examined in greater detail, movement by movement, and the differences in character between the two works are discussed. Whereas the movements which make up Métaboles are each devoted to exploring individual and largely independent ideas, the no less varied movements of Tout un monde are created from a pool of shared material, continually transformed and recombined throughout the work as a whole. The network of relationships and reminiscences created in this later work shows Dutilleux using the newly honed elements of his compositional language to return to his earlier preoccupations with memory, rekindled by the inspiration found in rereading Baudelaire, as he acknowledges in the work's title.

Dutilleux in the 1960s

By the beginning of the 1960s Dutilleux's reputation was such that he was increasingly being offered new posts and responsibilities. In 1960 he was invited onto the jury for the Prix de Rome, where he tried to reform the reactionary syllabus, and in 1961 he accepted Alfred Cortot's offer of

the Chair of Composition at the Ecole normale de musique de Paris.¹ Numerous other official invitations followed,² and in 1962 he resigned his post at the O.R.T.F., wishing to make more time available for composing. The death of Poulenc in 1963 prompted him to write a song for voice and piano, his first since 1944 and his last to date, but his main compositional energies during these years were devoted to a new orchestral commission from George Szell. The resulting work - Métaboles - was triumphantly premièred in Cleveland in January 1965.

In March of that year, while in the United States to attend another performance of Métaboles, Dutilleux suffered a cataract which gave him great discomfort for the next seven years, and nearly lost him the sight of his left eye, before it was successfully operated on in 1972 (Mari 96; Dutilleux 1993: 117). After an enforced rest from composition in 1966 and a trip to the Middle East, an aborted ballet project, to be based on Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal, stimulated the ideas for his next major

1 See Mari 1973: 79-81. His predecessors at the Ecole included Dukas, Honegger and Nadia Boulanger.

2 These included travelling to Canada to represent France at the International Congress of Composers in November 1960. In 1962 he turned down the chance to become General Inspector of Musical Education, but did agree in the following year to a request from André Malraux to serve on the National Music Commission (see Mari 1973: 80, 89).

work, a cello concerto that had been requested by Rostropovich in 1961 and was finished in time for its³ première in Aix-en-Provence in July 1970.

Developments in Dutilleux's musical language

After the second symphony Dutilleux finally bade farewell to the traditional, nineteenth-century pattern of symphony or sonata movements which had served him (with only a slight rearrangement in the oboe sonata) ever since the flute sonatina of 1943. He was still concerned to build large, symphonic forms from several movements, however (see his remarks on 'the possibility of symphonic music' quoted on p. 105-6 above, which date from these years), but began to investigate other models. Berg's Lyric Suite, which Dutilleux named in 1965 as one of the ten most influential twentieth-century works (see Mari 1973: 221), may have suggested the way that the five movements of Métaboles are interlinked, which the composer describes as follows: 'towards the end of each piece there is announced, often in filigree, the main motive of the

3 The only other works composed during this decade are one song, San Francisco Night (1963) and some piano music: Tous les chemins (for children, 1961), Résonances (1965) and Figures de Résonances (for two pianos, 1970).

following [movement]'.⁴ Dutilleux had already shown an interest in overall continuity by joining together some of the separate movements in both symphonies; now he took this to its logical conclusion, joining together all five movements. A circular scheme can be inferred from the return of the opening movement's theme in the final movement, and there is also a degree of symmetry in the positioning of the two slow movements either side of the centre. The same kind of symmetry is found in the five movements of Dutilleux's other major work of these years, Tout un monde lointain...; like Métaboles, it may have been influenced by the five-movement design of the fourth and fifth quartets of Bartók (which also appear in Dutilleux's 'top ten' selection).

By comparison with the somewhat eclectic character of the first symphony and the richly inclusive harmonic and motivic language of the second, the two works to be discussed in this chapter show a narrowing of focus and a tightening of technical control. This increased concentration and rigour is reflected in the harmonic language, for example, by the much less frequent use of tonal elements such as triads. As if to compensate for

4 'Vers la fin de chaque pièce se trouve annoncé, souvent en filigrane, le motif principal de la suivante' (Surchamp 1983: 12).

this, the reiteration or sustaining of particular pitches at registral extremes (of the kind seen in the first movement of the second symphony) becomes much more insistent and overt, especially in Métaboles, where a single pitch focus, E, is maintained almost throughout the entire work.

It is also noticeable that the non-triadic harmony in these works becomes much more systematic in its intervallic structure than previously. Harmonies are often built up from a restricted number of intervals (typically one, two or three), and in passages of full sonority chords of this kind can extend over a wide tessitura without duplicating any of its pitches in different octaves. Dutilleux may have followed the example of Lutosławski here, who had been systematically developing harmonies organised in this way since his five Iżakowicz songs of 1957 (see Stucky 1981: 65-70). The similarity becomes especially apparent when Dutilleux creates large chords, though he only rarely goes as far as Lutosławski in including all twelve pitches in a given harmony (see ex. 3.1).

**Ex. 3.1 Large chord structures
with limited intervallic content**

(i) *Métaboles* iii, b.1 (ii) iii, fig. 28 +2 (iii) v, b. 1; fig. 44 (iv) *Tout un monde lointain...* i, fig. 3 (v) ii, final bar

(vi) Lutoslawski: *Livre pour orchestre*
iv, fig. 410 fig. 414

The use of harmonies derived from modes or pitch collections, which had already featured in Dutilleux's music, also becomes more systematically controlled in these works. In place of the seven or eight pitches of diatonic or octatonic collections, Dutilleux now restricts himself to six, but consistently makes full use of them, as in ex. 3.2i and ii. Sometimes the progression of the harmonies is determined by each 'voice' stepping systematically through each pitch of the collection in descending (or ascending) order, as in ex. 3.2iii: the

procedure here is strongly reminiscent of the stepwise progressions produced by Messiaen from his 'modes of limited transposition', particularly characteristic of his keyboard writing in works up to the *Turangalila* symphony⁵ of 1949.

**Ex. 3.2 Chord sequences
drawn from a limited pitch collection**

(i) **fig. 35 Andantino** fig. 36 *Métaboles*, iv. figs 35-6

(ii) **Lent et extatique** *Tout un monde lointain...*, iv. b. 1-4

(iii) **fig. 13** *Métaboles*, iii, fig. 13

(iv) **c.f. Messiaen's use of descending chordal patterns** fig. 14 **Modéré** *Messiaen: Turangalila Symphony*, i, fig. 14

⁵ The collection employed by Dutilleux in ex. 3.2iii actually corresponds to the fourth of Messiaen's 'modes of limited transposition' (see Messiaen 1942: ch. XVI and Sherlaw Johnson 1975: 16-17).

The consequence of these more organised, rational approaches to the construction of harmony in Dutilleux's music is that it becomes, at the same time, less triadic and less freely chromatic. The second symphony had been Dutilleux's most chromatic work, and its chromaticism was largely unsystematic, arising from the rich and complex counterpoint. In these two later works counterpoint is much less prevalent, and more restricted harmonically when it does occur (as in the passage from which ex. 3.2iii is taken, figs 12-14 in Linéaire from Métaboles).

Both the rigour and the element of restriction demonstrated above with regard to the harmonic language of these works can also be observed in the motivic writing. Two themes from the finale to the first symphony suggest the origins of the new style, while also underlining the continuity of Dutilleux's stylistic development. Firstly, the 'theme' T is, like the opening theme of Métaboles, a short motive with a strong emphasis on one pitch, to which it repeatedly returns, thus keeping contour and harmonic⁶ movement tightly in check. The second thematic type demonstrated by the first symphony finale is the rhythmically even, indefinitely continuous 'passage-work'

⁶ The resemblances between these themes, and also the theme of the opening of the finale of the second symphony, are discussed in Potter 1997: 65.

formed by themes A and B. The closest parallel here is with the Vif from the first movement of Tout un monde, which also draws on two different themes used together in fast, even rhythmic values. But whereas, in the first symphony, themes A and B were highly variable in terms of their pitch level as well as their interval content, in Tout un monde, and also in Obsessionnel from Métaboles, the themes are invariant in their intervallic contour and are never transposed to different pitch levels. In this instance the absolute consistency imposed on these themes, whilst entirely in keeping with the general aesthetic of these works, is the result of Dutilleux's flirtation with serial techniques.

Serialism

Dutilleux has said that, for him, the attraction of serialism lay in 'the particular organisation of the language, which cuts down on waffle, imposes a structure, a logic'.⁷ However, these two movements (Obsessionnel from Métaboles, and Enigme from Tout un monde) remain the only pieces he has written which involve serial procedures. Furthermore, the rather idiosyncratic way in which

7 'Pour moi, ce qui m'intéressait ... c'est une organisation particulière du langage qui lui épargne les bavardages, impose une structure, une logique' (Surchamp 1983: 12).

Dutilleux employs these procedures is less pervasive but at the same time more restrictive than the way they are used by any of the three Viennese serial composers, for example.

The third movement from Métaboles, Obsessionnel, will serve as an example of Dutilleux's serial writing. A twelve-note theme is introduced at the beginning of the movement (double bass, bars 1-6). In all its subsequent appearances throughout the rest of the movement it is confined, as here, to a single melodic voice; that is, there is no redistribution of the intervals of the row between different 'voices' of the texture, which can create different intervals in the resulting pitch successions of each voice, and thus the potential for melodic variety. Furthermore, although Dutilleux makes use of the four different row forms, he uses no other transpositions of them. When one takes into account the fact that the row itself is already very limited in intervallic content (consisting almost exclusively of alternate semitones and tritones), these factors combine to produce a severe restriction on the potential variety of the melodic contour.

On the other hand, Dutilleux continues to organise the harmonies and their progressions more or less

independently of this melodic series. In fact, the movement shows quite a variety of different degrees of relatedness between the harmony and the intervals of the melodic row, but very little which requires Dutilleux to write harmonic formations which he would have been unlikely to write in a non-serial context. If anything, his harmonic vocabulary becomes more regressive in this movement, with a sequence of parallel 'dominant-seventh' chords in one passage, for example.

In Obsessionel, then, the serial lines do pervade the entire movement, sometimes singly, sometimes with different row-forms running concurrently. But whenever these lines are given harmonic support, the harmonies are not serial in their organisation. (The same holds true for the serial passages in Enigme; both movements are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.) Thus, the serial procedures used in these movements simply provide the composer with a new and more rigorous way of generating a melodic continuum of the kind he had devised along more ad hoc lines in the first symphony; for the rest, Dutilleux would rely as he had before on a variety of other methods.

Textures

The greater astringency of harmonic language and rigour of melodic writing examined above are paralleled in the works of the 1960s by a more exploratory attitude to sonority and texture; although Dutilleux had always had a fascination for the sensuous qualities of music, these works show him taking greater risks and embracing a wider range of sounds than previously.⁸ At the same time, the greater individuality of Dutilleux's harmonic and motivic language at this stage in his career means that, in so far as influences are suggested by these works, it is more often than not in the domain of texture. Nonetheless, Dutilleux claims that in these years he was still unfamiliar with much twentieth-century repertoire which is now widely known, and so specific instances of influence cannot be easily confirmed; and it is true that the greater astringency of sound would be perfectly justifiable as part of the general tendency of Dutilleux's musical language at the time, and does not require any external explanation.

8 The following discussion concentrates on aspects of the orchestral music, but even the piano pieces of these years explore a much more extreme and unconventional repertoire of sonorities than before, and in Figures de Résonances Dutilleux comes closer than in any other other work, arguably, to the purely experimental attitude to sound characteristic of such avant-garde composers as Ligeti and Berio.

Referring to Métaboles, for instance, Claude Glayman has suggested the influence of Schoenberg's Five pieces for orchestra, a work which Dutilleux now greatly admires. Though in general there is very little similarity between the five pieces that comprise Métaboles and Schoenberg's, there are parallels between the muffled sonorities and uneasy stillness of Farben (the third of Schoenberg's set and Dutilleux's favourite), and Torpide, the fourth movement of Métaboles. However, in 1993 Dutilleux claimed that at the time of writing Métaboles he did not yet know the Five pieces (Dutilleux 1993: 111), and it is true that they do not appear alongside Pierrot lunaire on his list of the ten most influential twentieth-century works, drawn up in 1965 (see Mari 1973: 221). The harsh, dissonant wind chords of the opening movement (shown in ex. 3.3 on p. 213 below) suggest that Dutilleux may have begun to absorb some ideas from Varèse: but again, while he now admires Octandre and certain other works, it is unlikely that he knew them well if at all at that time, despite a chance meeting with the composer in 1960 (Dutilleux 1993: 110). He did have an indirect access to Varèse's sound-world, however, through his familiarity with the music of Varèse's pupil Jolivet, with whom he had had repeated contact in a variety of different contexts over the years (: 11, 51, 52); indeed, the association of strident

sonorities with religious and occult ceremony implied by the title of this movement - Incantatoire - is perhaps more typical of Jolivet than of his teacher. Equally, the same qualities in this passage may suggest the music of Dutilleux's close contemporary Maurice Ohana: the relationship between them is discussed by Caroline Potter (1997: 189-92).

In Tout un monde there are textures whose very striking and unconventional effect derives from the systematic way in which sounds are deployed in registral space. Here, the works which may have suggested the textures in question were, as it happens, already known to Dutilleux. The movement of pianissimo chords across the full register in contrasting groups of strings at figs 37 and 81, for example, may have been influenced by the 'drowning scene' from Berg's Wozzeck, (which Dutilleux had been examining with his students at the Ecole Normale during these years (Potter 1997: 15)), as well as the final bars of Schoenberg's Erwartung. And the use of mirror inversions to create mysterious and chromatic lines in the highest and lowest registers of the strings, which is to become a characteristic sound in several later Dutilleux works, makes its first appearance here, at figs 33-4; there is a memorable precursor towards the end of the first movement of Bartók's Music for strings (b. 78-

81), which Dutilleux had known since the 1940s (and had⁹ included on his 'top ten' list). Whether or not Dutilleux's textures in these passages were suggested by Berg and Bartók, it is noteworthy that both take the idea of symmetry and central pitch focus which he had freely elaborated in the second symphony and use it with greater rigour.

In this way, the general narrowing of focus and a tightening of technical control which characterises Dutilleux's music in the 1960s is reflected in all aspects of the music's construction. This involved renouncing some of the possibilities explored by the symphonies: in particular, one notices the sparseness of counterpoint in Métaboles after the rich contrapuntal writing in many parts of the second symphony. Taken on their own terms, however, there is no doubt that Dutilleux justified the rationalisation of his musical language by producing works which were just as rich in variety, and as imaginative and luxurious in timbre, as anything he had produced up to that time.

In the remaining part of this chapter the two works

⁹ The celesta part in these bars provides another very distinctive sonority, which Dutilleux recreates elsewhere in Tout un monde: see Regard, fig. 40.

will be examined in greater detail, setting the procedures considered above into their musical context and showing the way that more systematic, logical procedures are combined with the empirical and intuitive decisions which still play a large part in Dutilleux's compositional technique.

Métaboles

This work was commissioned in 1959 by George Szell to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Cleveland Orchestra. Dutilleux finished the score in 1964 and it received its première in Cleveland in January 1965, followed by the European première in Paris in May 1965. The title of the work is an ancient Greek word which is used as a technical term in a number of different disciplines including military strategy and insect biology; all of the definitions denote a process by which the original element is partly kept the same, partly transformed into something else (for a fuller account of the various definitions, see Humbert 1985: 90-91). Dutilleux explains his use of the word as follows: 'a thematic element is transformed in a succession of small mutations. At a given moment these transformations become so extreme that they actually cause the initial motive to

change its nature.'¹⁰ Thus the title proclaims, as the central concept of the work, the continual variation which has been a growing preoccupation throughout the symphonies.

Though the five movements run continuously, each is distinctly characterised, and the first four movements each give prominence to a different section of the orchestra, while all come together on equal terms in the fifth. The whole work can be seen as a kind of concerto for orchestra, and the brilliant exploitation of the very large orchestral forces, including quadruple wind (specified by Szell when he commissioned the work) may have contributed to its success, although writing at the time of the première Dutilleux stressed that he did not conceive of the work in this way (1993: 113; 1965: 23). On the contrary, he viewed it in terms of the compositional discipline it had represented for him, saying that (over and above the specifically serial writing of the third movement) the whole work exhibits 'a certain serial organisation of the musical ideas'.¹¹

10 'un élément thématique se transforme par une succession de petites mutations. A un moment donné, ces transformations sont si accusées qu'elles confèrent au motif initial un véritable changement de nature' (Surchamp 1983: 12-13).

11 '...une certaine organisation sérielle de la pensée musicale' (Surchamp 1983: 12).

Critical reception

The first performances of Métaboles received a very favourable critical response, and it has remained one of Dutilleux's most frequently played pieces (see Mari 1973: 95 and Dutilleux 1993: 120). It was also seen to introduce new techniques into Dutilleux's music: Mari writes that 'Dutilleux wished Métaboles to be as original in its form as it was novel in the declamation of its phrases',¹² and in his review of the Paris premiere, Antoine Goléa suggested that Dutilleux experiments, 'in a much more conscious and organised way than in his preceding works, with certain "advanced" techniques'.¹³

Mari relates the individual movements to traditional genres: 'passing from a rondo to a lied, then to a passacaglia, to finish, after a variation on a single chord, with a scherzo'.¹⁴ The difficulty with this kind

12 'Dutilleux a voulu que les Métaboles possèdent autant d'originalité dans leur plan que de nouveauté dans la déclamation de la phrase' (Mari 1973: 180).

13 'Dutilleux [se livre] dans cette oeuvre, d'une façon beaucoup plus consciente et organisée que dans les oeuvres précédentes, à certaines expériences d'écriture dites "avancée"' (Golea 1965: 9).

14 'On passe d'un rondo à un lied puis à une passacaille pour terminer, après une variation autour d'un même accord, par un scherzo' (Mari 1973: 181).

of commentary is that in each case only one limited aspect of the genre referred to is relevant to the movement in hand, while most of the other implications of the term are misleading. Thus, the first movement does have a theme which returns repeatedly in the main 'key', but none of the other formal or stylistic characteristics of a rondo. Furthermore, it is not the same aspect of the genre which is relevant in each case, so that the analogies being made are not consistent; the movements are described respectively in terms of the form (i), the lyrical character (ii), an aspect of the motivic structure (iii), an aspect of the harmonic organisation (iv), the tempo and texture (v).

Mari follows on from this description with an account of the central formal principle uniting all the movements, citing the composer's own words: 'In each piece "the initial figure - melodic, rhythmic, harmonic or simply instrumental - undergoes a succession of transformations. At a certain stage of evolution (towards the end of each piece) the distortion is so pronounced that it gives rise to a new figure which ... serves as a starting point for

the following piece, and so forth..."¹⁵. Humbert bases his interpretation on the same idea, and also cites the composer to suggest that the same process of metabole underlies the form of the whole work as well as of each movement (see Humbert 1985: 91)¹⁶. This goes well beyond the Bergian model discussed earlier in terms of the continuity and interrelatedness of the whole, and in the discussion below I will suggest that the music of Métaboles does not conform quite so closely to this overtly organic model as these accounts imply.

i) Incantatoire

The first piece of the set immediately presents the strongest possible contrast to the notions of organic growth hinted at in the above quotations. The opening bars (ex. 3.3) establish the terms of reference: the

15 'Dans chacune de ces pièces "la figure initiale - mélodique, rythmique, harmonique ou simplement instrumentale - subit une succession de transformations. A un certain stade d'évolution (vers la fin de chaque pièce), la déformation est si accusée qu'elle engendre une nouvelle figure qui ... sert d'amorce à la pièce suivante et ainsi de suite..." (Mari 1973: 181-2).

16 Potter's discussion of Dutilleux's technique of croissance progressive is more reliable than Humbert's (e.g. Potter 1997: 60-65), but she only refers very briefly to its specific manifestation in Métaboles (e.g.: 67-8, 85, 188).

melodic line is short, repetitive, harmonically static and fixed insistently on its opening note e''' over the pedal bass E'; the texture is homophonic and the sonority harsh, both because of the harmony, dominated by widely-spaced dissonant intervals such as minor ninths and the shrill timbre of Eb clarinet and high oboes. Whether the influence lying behind this music is Jolivet and Varèse, or Stravinsky, the material is cast as a block, essentially static and non-developmental. When it is immediately restated, to identical harmonies, the rhythm is varied. In the absence of any pulse, however, the durations of the notes do not delineate a clear rhythmic profile, so much as avoid any four-square regularities which would undermine the uncompromising, alien impression of the music: the rhythmic variation in b. 6-10 only prolongs the unmeasured feeling of the opening.

Ex. 3.3 *Largamente**Métaboles*, i, b.1-5

The movement as a whole consists of restatements of this opening idea, varied only by means of arabesque, timbre and - occasionally and briefly - harmony. Obviously, the harmonic changes are those which might offer the greatest potential for development in the traditional sense; however, they remain fixed either to the main melodic cell (e.g. figs 3-5, 5-6) with its obsessive reiteration of the main pitch E in the treble, or to a pedal E' in the bass (e.g. figs 6-8). Just as the opening phrase only breaks off from the initial sonority in order to return to it immediately afterwards, the same static and insistent quality operates at the level of the whole movement, which only ever strays from the opening melodies and harmonies in order to articulate the more clearly their continual return. There is no development, and the final statement is indistinguishable from the first, except that it ends on a bare octave E.

The passage from figs 3 to 6 has been cited by the composer as an example of his interest in creating effects of 'resonance' (Humbert 1985: 94; see also Potter 1997: 136). The effect in question is produced by introducing a quiet but sustained sonority at the same time as, or immediately after, a much louder but very short sonority, contrasted in both harmony and timbre. For an instant

only the louder sound is heard, but then as it disappears the first seems to emerge. The procedure has already been introduced in miniature in the second and fourth chords of the piece, and also appears briefly in the second movement of the second symphony, at fig. 10. This earlier passage has strong similarities with the opening of *Incantatoire*, setting a sustained chord bounded by pitches e''' and E' against a pentatonic chord on Db , scored as two accented demisemiquavers for xylophone, harp and horns (c.f. *Incantatoire* b. 13; see ex. 3.4). In the later work both harmonies are made more astringent by the addition of more dissonant pitches.

Ex. 3.4 (i) Second symphony, ii, fig. 10 (ii) *Métaboles*, i, fig. 1 + 3

* = Db pentatonic

** = Db pentatonic plus $g4'$ and $a4'$

pp

The passage at fig. 3, however, with its succession of changing harmonies, more closely resembles a short piano piece called *Résonances* which Dutilleux wrote the year after completing *Métaboles*, in 1965. Although the piano piece was written later, the basic idea of setting resonances into vibration with a loud and neighbouring but otherwise unrelated chord, is essentially pianistic,

dependent on the proximity of the strings inside the piano. The imitation of the faint sound of resonating piano strings can be seen as an unusual instance of Dutilleux approaching orchestral sounds from a pianistic starting point. In Métaboles the effect is not merely imitated but also enhanced: the opposition of the two sounds is turned into a spatial and timbral opposition between different parts of the orchestra.

While the melody and its homophonic harmonic support undoubtedly dominate the movement, the other main element is the fantastical web of arabesque and decoration spun by the woodwind instruments, which form the dominant¹⁷ instrumental family in this movement. This filigree writing appears twice in the movement, at figs 1-3 and 6-8: in the first of these passages it decorates the main melody (and harmony) while in the second it produces a new harmonic progression, though still anchored to the E' pedal in the bass. The pitch-content of the decorative figures derives from various procedures, of which arpeggiation of the main harmony is the simplest. But the

17 This woodwind writing may have been influenced by that in the Introduction to part 1 of Stravinsky's Le sacre du printemps. When Antoine Goléa suggested the similarity between these two works, however, he had in mind their opening melodies (1965: 9; see also Brunner 1994: 26-7).

sparseness of the chord sets severe limitations on this, and the minor ninths in its structure make octave transposition of individual pitches unconvincing: therefore, other kinds of decoration are called for to fill out the rapid and virtuosic figurations. Upper neighbour-notes, leant on expressively like appoggiaturas, are used, usually as the apex of a rapid ascending and descending figure, but as these lines proliferate they begin to fill some of the wide spaces of the original chord with added 'harmony-notes'; some of these are shown in ex. 3.5.

Ex. 3.5 Extra harmony notes added
to opening chord of 'Incantatoire' (figs 1-3)

Métaboles, i, figs 1-2

Ex. 3.6 Inversion and retrograde figurations

Métaboles, i, fig. 6

In the second passage (figs 6-8) the symmetries of inversion and retrograde are also introduced; these may have been among the techniques Dutilleux had in mind when he spoke of 'a certain serial organisation of the musical ideas' (see p. 209 above, and ex. 3.6).

Although the timbres employed throughout most of the first movement include quite a variety of sonorities, from the wind chords of the melody to the sparkling decorative texture at fig. 1, and from the explosive chords of bb. 2, 4 and fig. 3 to the background of sustained strings at figs 1 and 6, all of these elements are quickly introduced and remain relatively constant on their subsequent appearances; again, this contributes to the monolithic character of the movement. There is one place where a new, sharply contrasted sonority is introduced, however: the dark string harmonisation at fig. 5. The melody is the same as at the opening, extended by one more phrase, but the main effect of the sudden and unexpected entry of the strings is of a discontinuity, a juxtaposition. The break is equally abrupt after the end of the movement, when the strings enter again with the same phrase at the opening of the second movement. At this stage in the work the music proceeds by repetition and juxtaposition rather than by gradual change.

ii) Linéaire

After the opening bars of this movement, which is scored exclusively for the strings of the orchestra, the theme from Incantatoire is not heard again, and the music begins tentatively to develop a smoother sense of continuity. In the first of four sections the new 'tail-figure', added when the string harmonisation first appeared at fig. 5 in the first movement, is taken up three times, the second and third with imitation. Between these phrases there are hiatuses, however, and isolated chords separated by silences. The pandiatonic harmonies of these chords may have been derived from the 'resonance' chords at fig. 3, many of which are also pandiatonic: the first of these harmonies, in b. 5 of the second movement, for example, is identical to the chord at b. 29-30 of the first movement (see ex. 3.7).

Ex. 3.7
Lento Moderato

Métaboles, ii, b. 5-8

* c.f. b. 29-30
from *Incantatoire*

It is in the second section, starting at fig. 11, that the music really begins to develop continuously, starting from a new melody heard on a solo cello, which as Humbert admits, is not related to the first movement's theme (1985: 96-7). Its defining contour of alternate descending thirds and semitones is subject to continual variation, leading to a free canonic imitation between first violins (two octaves higher, descending from e'') and cellos at fig. 12, before it eventually settles on a consistent intervallic structure which produces the six-note collection, or 'mode of limited transposition' shown in ex. 3.2iii on p. 199 above. At the same time, the accompanying lines of parallel chords expand into the registral space opened up by the high first violin line, and gradually assume symmetrical patterns of diverging and converging motion.

The melodic and accompanying lines coalesce and rise to a climax (at fig. 14, the beginning of the third section of the movement), where the pitches of the 'mode' are separated out into four different triads, superimposed in different registers. Immediately, the two lower layers are echoed in quiet chords of harmonics: another 'resonance' effect, in which the natural order of stimulus and echo is sometimes reversed. Like the earlier 'resonance' passage at fig. 3, it also exploits the

spatial distribution of the different instrumental sections of the orchestra. The separate layers then recombine for a final reminiscence of the 'tail figure' from the beginning of the movement, and then the short final section fills out the registral space in the same way as at fig. 11, but without the cello melody.

In the main part of the movement the motivic material is largely independent of the rest of the work. The pitch emphasis of the first movement is continued, however, although in a less insistent form. Whereas the pitch E governed both the bass and the top line of the texture in the first movement, in Linéaire it is confined to the top line, and to five moments of harmonic focus. Three of these occur as the final note of the 'tail-figure' (in b. 5 and at figs 11 and 15), unharmonised and therefore providing a much weaker and less conclusive resolution to the phrase than in Incantatoire. The other two moments are marked by occurrences of the upper boundary pitch e"" (at fig. 12, and at the very end of the movement), at the moments of greatest registral expansion in this movement which is conceived so much in terms of registral space. In both these places the bass note is Bb', approached by step. This is a different harmonic scheme from the first movement, where Bb was never sounded in the bass but was juxtaposed with E in the melodic line; nonetheless it

maintains the most important points of pitch focus from the first movement while using them in a much freer and more flexible way.

iii) Obsessionnel

If any of the movements is a scherzo, to use Mari's terminology discussed above, it is not Flamboyant but this one, marked Scherzando. The movement opens with a widespread harmony in the strings partly carried over from the previous bar: while the upper pitch e'" is retained, the bass has moved to A', and it falls to G#' in bar 4. Throughout the third movement two bass pitches are highlighted, often by the timpani and trombones. One is E, mostly in the central part of the movement, at figs 19, 20, 23, 27-8; and the other is G#', usually preceded by A, particularly at the beginning and end of the movement, as well as at figs. 18 +4, 21, 31. Thus, the harmonic progressions in this movement all unfold in relation to a fixed point of reference, as in the preceding movements; in this sense, Obsessionnel remains true to Dutilleux's declared preference for a hierarchy of pitches and chords rather than a pure atonality (see, for example, Surchamp 1983: 12).

The overall shape of the movement does not seem to follow any obvious formal precedent, but clear changes of

texture articulate seven sections, as shown in the Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Formal plan of Obsessionnel (*Métaboles*, 3rd movement)
as suggested by textural changes.

Section	Fig.	Brief description of texture
I	15 +4 (beginning)	Theme in bass, staccato; sustained harmonies in middle register.
II	20 +2	Syncopated chords in woodwind.
III	23	Pizzicato fugato.
IV	25	'Resonance' effect in brass.
V	27	Staccato chords in wind; Rising triplets in strings.
VI	28	Woodwind: theme in triplets; Brass: theme in alternately sustained notes; Percussion: begin ostinato figure; crescendo.
VII	31	Sudden drop from preceding <i>fortissimo</i> to <i>piano</i> ; Fragments dying away and interspersed with silence, Percussion revealed as rest of orchestra fades.

These sections do not correspond to the quasi-cadential moments of bass pitch-focus listed above, nor are they clarified by thematic references, for a single motivic idea runs continuously throughout the entire movement.

The theme presented by the double bass in b. 1-6 is twice prefigured in the previous movement, concealed as an inner voice in a dense mass of sustained string lines (viola 1, fig. 11 + 4; violins, fig. 15). According to

Mari it 'counts off' the twelve notes of the chromatic scale 'with a trace of irony':¹⁸ it is, at any rate, a twelve-note row, as mentioned above, and the movement as a whole is built around presentations of its four different forms. The row is mostly, but not entirely, constructed from alternating minor seconds and tritones;¹⁹ it begins on E, and is never transposed (see ex. 3.8).

Ex. 3.8 *Métaboles*, iii.

The row actually used in 'Obsessionnel'

(Humbert's alternative row, with consistent alternation of tritones and semitones)

As explained earlier in this chapter, the harmonies remain largely independent of the series, showing at different points a variety of different relations to the serial

18 'il ... égrène avec un semblant d'ironie, à la manière d'une série, les douze degrés de la gamme chromatique' (Mari 1973: 186).

19 As Humbert shows, if Dutilleux had chosen to reverse the order of his two main intervals, he could have begun his row with both of the key pitches from the first two movements, E and Bb, and produced a full twelve-note row from the regular repetition of this one cell (1985: 98-9, see ex. 3.8ii). However, the order that Dutilleux did choose obliges him to break the pattern in order to avoid a redundant repetition of the initial pitch, E, before the row was completed. Perhaps the necessary irregularity entailed by this particular row may have been perceived as an advantage by the composer.

structure. Firstly, there are chords which have almost no relation at all to the melodic row, the only connection being the descending semitone produced by the voice-leading between the top note of one chord and the next, as in the chords at figs 16 and 17. Sometimes this idea is extended into a descending sequence, as at figs 18 (clarinets), 25-6 (trombones, violins), and briefly at fig. 30 (woodwind). This 'zigzag' figure also appears in the finale of the first symphony in a similarly covert way (designated as motive M in chapter 2 above); and it also links in with Incantatoire, where it briefly provides a means of harmonic development in the only passage in that movement not governed by the opening progression (fig. 7 + 2-3; see ex. 3.9).



The next degree of involvement of the harmonies with the series is the one most prevalent in this movement; as described above, it consists in 'suspending' simple triadic chords from a row statement in the top line. The semitone motive is important here too, as generally the chord for the first note of each pair is simply transposed for the

second, thus dividing the row into a succession of semitone steps. The diatonic character of the chords gives them the strongest possible contrast to the chromaticism of the row.

In sections V and VI the main serial lines begin to fill out a wider range of registral space, and as a result the harmonies too increase their overall span; sometimes this is achieved by superimposing triadic chords in different octaves (e.g. fig. 27). In one passage, at figs 28-9, fourth chords are used, and this effects a much closer integration of harmonic and melodic structure. Each two-note cell of the main part of the row (i.e. the first nine pitches of the prime form, before the 'irregular' intervals) is the transposition of the preceding (or following) cell by a perfect fourth, and for this reason each two chords in this passage manifest a serial statement (disregarding the 'irregular' ending of the row). The immediately audible effect of this is that when these chords follow the row theme in parallel the same pairs of harmonies keep recurring, changed only in that they have gained or lost an extra note at the top or bottom of the chord (see ex. 3.10).

Ex. 3.10 Scherzando

Métaboles, iii, fig. 28

each bracketed pair of chords has an identical intervallic structure equivalent to that of order nos 7 8

5 6
3 4
1 2

Although these chords do have a serial derivation, they differ little from the kinds of harmonic writing Dutilleux regularly employs: fourth chords are not new in his work (c.f. the ending of the second symphony (fig. 58 +5), and figs 49-50, 54-5 in the last movement of the first), and the idea of largely parallel movement led by an upper melodic line is, as we have seen, very common in his music. There is, however, one very brief passage at the very end of the movement where Dutilleux breaks with his normal procedure and writes a sequence of chords in which the row is used vertically as well as horizontally (ex. 3.11). These chords represent the only occasion on which Dutilleux fully integrates twelve-note thinking into his harmonic language; even this small gesture is made more in the direction of Schoenbergian serialism rather than that of younger post-war contemporaries.

ex. 3.11

Métaboles, iii, fig. 32 +3

Order nos	1	6	7	10	1
	2	4	9	11	5
	3	5	8	12	2

Tbn. 3

4

The composer has left two interesting accounts of his serial writing in this movement: firstly, in an interview with Angelico Surchamp in 1983, he says '...in Obsessionnel a real series is developed according to the most rigorous procedures entailed by that technique, even with their consequences in the harmonic domain'.²⁰ That he considered this very restricted, partial use of serialism in such terms serves to emphasise the aesthetic distance between his own position and that of more radical serial composers. Secondly, Dutilleux recalls how Métaboles was the first work of his which Boulez took an interest in (Nichols 1991-2; see also Dutilleux 1993: 72), and wonders if it was because this was the first work in which he had made use of serial procedures. It is possible to see how the general sound-world and harmonic language of Métaboles, and particularly its first and fourth movements, might have appealed to Boulez more than any of Dutilleux's previous works. But is hard to believe that the serial procedures, which in fact make so little difference to Dutilleux's compositional technique, could have won over the composer who had famously castigated Schoenberg himself for not following through the full

20 '... et dans Obsessionnel, une véritable série se développe selon des procédés les plus rigoureux que propose cette technique, même avec leurs conséquences dans l'ordre harmonique' (Surchamp 1983: 12).

implications of serial thinking (see Boulez 1966: 51).

One of the freely composed lines in section II makes a discreet reference to the tritone figure of the opening movement, as Humbert has observed (see the first flute part at figs 21 -2; 22 -2; Humbert 1985: 100). More important, perhaps, in terms of the relation of this movement to the work as a whole, is the fact that, because of the structure of the row theme, the melodic lines throughout the movement are filled with tritone leaps. As we have seen, the connection between this movement and the preceding one is well hidden, and the same is true of the link to the fourth movement, which is simply a rhythmic figure repeated over an eight-beat cycle on various percussion instruments (from fig. 28 on). Although this precise rhythm does not reappear in Torpide, the pattern introduced at fig. 37 is rather similar, and ensemble percussion writing becomes a feature of the movement as a whole.

iv) Torpide

As discussed above, the economy and focus of Dutilleux's writing leads him here to a new experiment, one which he was to repeat, on a less strict basis, in Tout un monde lointain.... Throughout the movement, which consists of

three elements - unpitched percussion, a brass 'chorale' and sporadic flurries from the clarinets - the pitch material is drawn from an unvaried collection of just six pitches: C, D, E, F#, G, Ab (see ex. 3.2i on p. 199 above). The collection has a predominance of whole-tone elements, which undoubtedly contributes to the feeling of inertia which the composer evokes by his title. The brass phrases are arranged to derive maximum variety of spacing and order within the range of what is available in the collection, but the phrases are always short and falling in the upper voice. The bass-line is almost exclusively restricted to three notes forming an augmented triad C' - E' - Ab' (the only exception is the G' at b. 14). The clarinet phrases (which occasionally include pitches from outside the collection) also tend to lose energy, and the falling arabesques, which descend into lower register via the bass clarinet, are again somewhat reminiscent of Le sacre (e.g. figs 140-1, 1947 revision).

Two main ideas can be discerned in the percussion writing (see ex. 3.12). The first appears in b. 2, and divides into three elements, of which the first remains invariant, the second is considerably extended, and the third is reduced. The second idea is stated only twice, at fig. 37. Here the timbral range is widened to include the brighter sound of temple blocks, and the deeper sound

of the bass drum: these come at either end of a fixed rhythmic pattern which runs through the non-metallic instruments in descending order.

Ex. 3.12 First idea
b. 2 Toms

Cymbale chinoise

fig. 37

Second idea

Métaboles, iv

pp

Element 1

2

3

2 T. Bl.

Snare Drum

3 Toms

Bass Drum

The musical notation is on a single staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. It shows a sequence of notes and rests. Brackets below the staff group the notes into three elements: 'Element 1' (first two notes), '2' (next two notes), and '3' (last two notes). Above the staff, labels indicate the instruments: 'b. 2 Toms' for the first two notes, 'Cymbale chinoise' for the next two, and 'fig. 37' for the last two. To the right, 'Second idea' is indicated above a sequence of notes, and 'Métaboles, iv' is indicated above a final sequence of notes. Below the staff, labels indicate the instruments: '2 T. Bl.' for the first two notes, 'Snare Drum' for the next two, and '3 Toms' for the last two. A 'Bass Drum' label is also present at the end of the sequence.

In conjunction with a slow, homophonic idea in the three clarinets, this second idea comprises the contrasting material of a ternary middle section, before an extended clarinet arabesque leads to the return of the opening idea at fig. 40. This ternary scheme does not affect the brass 'chorale', which continues throughout. One other new timbre is introduced in the 'middle section', in complete contrast to the rest of the texture: the crisp, repeated e'''s of the xylophone from fig. 37 +1. Together with the whole-tone cluster in the three clarinets at fig. 41, they provide the link to the final movement.

v) Flamboyant

The final movement is the most complex in form and the most varied in content, combining new harmonic and melodic ideas with an extended reworking of material from the first movement. After the torpor of the previous

movement, increasing animation is now the governing principle, and the movement, whose themes and textures divide it into five sections, describes two crescendos. The first culminates in the return of the theme from Incantatoire at the beginning of the third section (fig. 54), and the second has no culmination, continuing to rise in intensity right up to the end.

Table 3.2 Formal plan of Flamboyant (*Métaboles*, final movement).

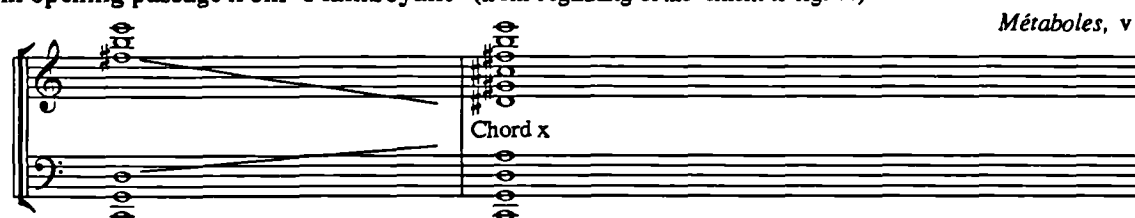
Section	Fig.	Description	Overall dynamics	Reminiscences
I	41 +2 (beginning)	Harmony expands and texture developed	from <i>ppp</i>	xylo: cf. fig. 38 -1 clar's: cf. figs 41, 11 chord x: cf. fig. 28 ww at fig. 43: cf. fig. 1
II.i	48	9/16: new melodic idea Y (fugato) in strings against ww. chords; fig. 50: Y in woodwind.	... to ...	
II.ii	52	ww. chords from II.i continue; new countermelody in tpt and tbn.		
III	54	<i>Incantatoire</i> theme in vlms and tpt (canon)	<i>f</i> , first climax; diminuendo to	cf. <i>Incantatoire</i> , opening theme cf. bass fifths (section I)
IV	59	<i>Incantatoire</i> theme in original harmonisation (except for bass fifths)	<i>p/pp</i>	cf. <i>Incantatoire</i> , opening thm. with harmonisation and <i>sfp</i> resonance effects
V	61	Y with ww chords, <i>Incantatoire</i> theme, tutti	<i>fp</i> , crescendo to <i>ff</i> , <i>ffff</i> at end	cf. opening xylo figure, opening bass fifths, Y rhythm in side-drum (fig. 63)

At the opening the e''' xylophone figure from Torpide is extended downwards in a chord of perfect fourths (as at fig. 28 of the third movement, see ex. 3.8 on p. 224 above) until at fig. 43 the addition of extra pitches 'meets' the uppermost pitches of a chord of perfect fifths

which has been extended upwards from the bass C' (see ex. 3.13). At the same time, the clarinet whole-tone cluster carried over from fig. 41 rises in a succession of minor thirds and seconds (this idea from *Linéaire*, fig. 11), breaking at fig. 43 into woodwind arabesques recalling those from the first movement (c.f. fig. 1).

Ex. 3.13 Harmonic enrichment

in opening passage from 'Flamboyant' (from beginning of movement to fig. 44)



The whole opening section as far as fig. 46 is an exercise in the gradual transformation of an orchestral texture, in terms of register, density, timbre and harmony. The predominant harmony (x) is a ~~ten~~ -note chord covering a wide range and built up using a limited number of intervals: as noted on p. 197-8 above, it forms an interesting parallel to the technique of twelve-note harmony which Lutosławski had been developing during these years. The brass chords from *Torpide* make one last reappearance (figs 46-7), before the bass-line falls from C to B' at fig. 48, with the introduction of an important new melodic idea in 9/16 time: this marks the beginning of the second section of the movement.

The 9/16 melody is built up by the string instruments in a kind of fugato, against sustained wind chords whose upper line traces the same contour as the melody. After it has been taken up by the woodwind (fig. 50) the sustained chords return against a new melodic idea which is exchanged between trumpet and trombone (fig. 52). Again there is a textural and harmonic expansion, though this time it has a thematic foil, and the bass fifths on C reappear under a new layer of harmony in the upper register, developed from the wind chords. This leads into the climactic third section at fig. 54, in which the opening theme from Incantatoire is reintroduced in a canon at the minor third between trumpet and violins. The texture is further enriched by woodwind arabesques and countermelodies in the trombones and (at fig. 55) the horns. Then, in a gradual decrescendo, the texture and harmony is thinned out until the Incantatoire melody reappears, pianissimo, at its original pitch (on e''') and with a reminiscence of its original harmony (section 4; fig. 59). In the bass the original bass-note E' and the low fifths from the beginning of this final movement are combined. The final section draws together all these elements (from fig. 61), together with the 9/16 melody, chord x and the xylophone rhythm from earlier in the movement, in an exhilarating crescendo which gradually

draws all the material onto the central and final note E.

Flamboyant is the only one of the five movements to give all sections of the orchestra equal prominence, and is also unique in that instead of exploring a limited set of textures it is devoted to the thoroughgoing transformation of texture to embrace the widest range of contrasts. It certainly justifies the composer's modest remarks concerning his ideal of orchestral writing:

It's a step - no more - towards the [kind of] orchestral expression that I wish for, that I imagine: wide-ranging but not facile, multifarious without confusion. (21)

This quality enables Dutilleux to use Flamboyant to end the work with a gesture of synthesis, drawing together references to material from all four preceding movements, which had previously remained sharply distinct and separate in the textures (as well as most of the motivic and harmonic material) which they explored.

This final synthesis is not typical of the work as a whole, however. The stricter and more systematic compositional procedures which underlie many aspects of Métaboles (by comparison to Dutilleux's previous works)

21 'C'est un pas, voilà tout, vers une expression orchestrale que je souhaite, que j'imagine, globale sans facilité, multiple sans confusion' (Dutilleux 1965: 23).

give rise to strongly individual musical worlds for each movement: until the fifth movement, I would suggest, there are only rather limited, tenuous connections between movements, whether in terms of continuity or of shared material. In my opinion, the assertions of Mari and Humbert discussed earlier, about Métaboles being a study in continual transformation, exaggerate the degree to which the material of all five differently characterised movements interrelates, and do not give due acknowledgement to the static, non-developmental aspects of the work (particularly in the first and fourth movements). This is a pity, for it obscures the unique position Métaboles has in the canon of Dutilleux's works precisely because of these aspects.

Tout un monde lointain...

This concerto for cello and orchestra was commissioned by Mstislav Rostropovitch in 1961, while Dutilleux was at work on Métaboles. It was premiered at the Festival of Aix en-Provence in 1970, and warmly received, despite the difficulties caused by the mistral (the performance was in the open air). It quickly established itself in the repertoire, and together with Métaboles has become the most frequently played of Dutilleux's works, as well as one of the most admired. Amidst more general praise, many

critics at the first performances admired the way that the notorious difficulties of balancing solo cello and orchestra were so triumphantly overcome: '[the] music [is] cloaked in a sumptuous orchestration which - miraculously²² - illuminates the soloist without ever drowning him'.

Just before he began to work on the concerto, Dutilleux had been asked by Roland Petit to write a score for a ballet based on Les Fleurs du Mal which would be given its first performance at the Paris Opéra in celebration of the centenary of Baudelaire's death in 1867. Despite reservations about the project he had embarked on a very thorough reading of almost all of the poet's collected writings, having warned Petit of what he felt to be the dangers of a realistic, figurative approach to such material (Surchamp 1983: 14). As it turned out, the scenario, devised by Jean Cau, proved to be just the kind of rather literal, narrative treatment which Dutilleux wished to avoid, and he withdrew from the project. However, by this stage he found himself 'totally impregnated' with Baudelaire's writing, and found, 'by a kind of osmosis', that it remained with him as he began

22 'musique drapée dans une orchestration somptueuse qui - ô miracle - illumine le soliste sans jamais le couvrir' (Pascal 1971). The transparency of scoring seems to have disappointed certain critics, such as Jacques Longchamp (1971), quoted in Humbert 1985: 136.

work on the new cello concerto. Although there is no programmatic depiction of specific scenes or characters, he felt that the ambience of the new work justified taking its title and the epigrams which head each movement from Baudelaire's work. Perhaps the most important aspect of this poetry, with regard to Dutilleux's music, was its exploration of the interrelation of memory, perception and fantasy, which inspired the composer to draw together his different musical ideas in a web of allusions and
23
reminiscences.

The five interlinked movements have certain parallels with Métaboles, with two slow movements in second and fourth place. There are also some specific sonorities which seem to be carried over from the earlier work, especially in the third movement Houles, such as the wind chord at fig. 52-3, which is almost identical to the opening chord of Métaboles, the woodwind arabesques which follow this chord, and the 'resonance' effect which occurs at fig. 48. There is a prominent role for muted brass chords in the fourth movement of each work, and these resemble each other not only in sonority and mood but also in the details of their compositional technique, as will

23 The attraction of Baudelaire's poetry for Dutilleux, and its relation to his music, is discussed at length in a separate article (Thurlow 1997: 71-91).

be discussed below.

Perhaps the biggest single development from Métaboles concerns the degree to which the material of all five differently characterised movements interrelates. I have already suggested that the different movements of Métaboles are for the most part, only loosely interconnected. In Tout un monde lointain... Dutilleux seems to have gained a greater confidence in handling the new aspects of harmony and texture that he had developed in Métaboles, and draws them into a web of reminiscence and allusion such as he had previously woven in the second symphony. The discussion below will aim to show the extent to which the rich and evocative ideas of this piece are created by transforming and recombining earlier material.

i) Enigme

A slow introduction leads to a fast movement (Vif) with four 'variations' (marked as such in the score). The introduction is a cadenza for the soloist, which tentatively introduces many of the ideas which will be developed throughout the rest of the work. Over a cymbal roll, the opening phrase, with its free retrograde, contains two motivic ideas of later importance, A and B. In successive restatements, separated by pauses, A is

extended to include more pitches and rise to a higher peak, which is then elaborated, before some kind of descent which freely evokes the contour of B. The third of these phrases introduces a further idea: a pattern of perfect fourths which descend either by tones or semitones, C (ex. 3.14). As variation 4 will demonstrate later in the movement, this pattern derives from the intervals of theme A.

Ex. 3.14 'Tout un monde lointain...':

themes A, B, and C

Tout un monde lointain..., i, opening bars.

Très libre
et flexible

A B

p

fig. 2 C

mf

7 7

sim.

As a backdrop to this third phrase, the cymbal rolls are replaced by a series of sustained chords in the strings. These chords fan outwards from a narrow central cluster to a wide-spread harmony covering seven octaves (at fig. 4). This chord-theme will also return later in the work, and derives from the rising pitches of the opening cello line A (ex. 3.15), showing again how Dutilleux frequently conceives of chord progressions in terms of the line formed by their uppermost notes.

Ex. 3.15 Chord-theme

Tout un monde lointain..., i, figs 1-4

(strings, figs 1-4)

ppp

c.f. A

(b.4)

p

(later, e.g. fig. 43 +1)

The last of these chords coincides with the highpoint of this opening section for the cello, whose fourth phrase extends the range dramatically to a reiterated $f\sharp'''$ (fig. 4). The extremes which define this trajectory, C and $f\sharp'''$, highlight the pitches which are to function as tonal reference points (particularly in the bass) throughout the rest of the first movement, whose main section Vif begins after another theme (D) has been introduced by the cello in the course of its descent back to the low C.

Ex. 3.16 Themes D and E

Theme D

cresc.

f

p

Tout un monde lointain..., i, fig. 4 +2

ii Theme E

pizz.

mf

f

Tout un monde lointain..., i, fig. 7-3

The Vif opens with the bass-note F#', emphasised with anacrusis glissandos from C in different instruments which have a quasi-cadential role. In the second half of this section, at fig. 7, the bass switches to C, and this then remains the predominant bass note until F#' is reestablished at fig 9. A new motivic idea appears (E), and like A it is gradually extended to reveal more pitches. It is also similar to theme A in its initial emphasis on C and F#, which are the pitches by which both themes are related to the prevailing harmonies or bass-line. For these reasons it is easy to miss the fact that there are two different themes, and not one, which reappear throughout the rest of the movement: the fact that E is a twelve-note row (and treated as such) shows how thoroughly Dutilleux integrates his use of serial techniques into his own style, as was also the case in Obsessionnel.

Like the row in that earlier movement, theme E is not transposed, but here its use is more neatly segregated into different sections, or 'variations' as the composer calls them. The first section builds up E from an initial five-note cell to its full length of twelve notes (often thirteen, as will be explained on p. 244 below), before abandoning it in favour of the chord-theme at fig. 7, which is extended to include two more pitches from theme

A. Variation 1, from fig. 9, concentrates exclusively on theme E in its prime form, again with an emphasis on F#' bass notes, shifting to C in the second half of the variation (from fig. 11).

In variation 2 (from fig. 12) prime and inverted forms are combined in counterpoint, followed immediately by the retrograde and retrograde inversion; against this the cello develops theme A, before taking up the orchestra's material from fig. 14, where the presentation of E simplifies to alternating RI and I forms alone; F# now predominates in a bass-line which begins to participate more actively in the thematic working. In variation 3, still over F#, all four forms of E are again used, until a new figure is developed at fig. 19: a pair of whole-tone steps separated by a major seventh. Although this motive can be seen to have been implicit in some of the ideas in the introduction, this is its first explicit statement, both as a melodic line and as harmony.

After this, at fig. 21, theme A is given in its longest extension, which forms a ten-note row, presented exactly in the style of the genuinely serial theme E.

The fourth variation, finally, drops theme E altogether, and also abandons the bass focus on F# and C,

to develop another aspect from theme A, the fourths of motive C. The chord theme appears, transposed up by a perfect fourth, and at fig. 26 the bass settles onto an alternation of D and Ab, the notes which will provide the bass focus for much of the next two movements.

The treatment of the row (E) is unconventional in one important respect, apart from its being intertwined with all the non-serial material derived from A as described above. Its opening pitches are continually reordered, in order to contribute to the emphasis in the bass on either C or F#. To summarise: the order of the first two (and occasionally three) pitches, C and F# (and G#), is completely interchangeable, and the row often ends with C after the A, instead of (or as well as) the earlier C. Variations of this kind are found in all four row-forms. In this respect, too, the treatment of the row-theme E puts it on a similar footing to the non-serial A, whose opening notes are also reordered in line with the prevailing bass emphasis (e.g. C G# F# B ... at fig. 22).

Dutilleux's treatment of the row differs strongly from that of Obsessionnel in respect of its harmonisation. In contrast to the slightly arbitrary selection, in Obsessionnel, of chords with no obvious relation to the series or to other material, he now finds a solution which is more consistent and economical. Still wary of using

the row as a source of vertical intervals, or chord structure, Dutilleux opts in a large part of this movement for the barest of textures, so that there is little or no harmony between the row themes and the occasional bass pitches; when chord sequences are introduced they take the form of the chord-theme already heard in the introduction, which derives from theme A. Where vertical intervals are integrated with the row, in a series of dyads at fig. 14, it is as much in order to vary and develop the texture and contour of the theme as to develop new harmonies.

The similarities between Dutilleux's personal brand of serial composition and his earlier experiments with rhythmically even, continuous lines (in themes A and B in the finale of the first symphony) were mentioned earlier in this chapter when discussing Obsessionnel. They are, perhaps, even stronger here where two themes, distinct in intervallic shape but alike in treatment and effect, are again alternated and interwoven. If there is any truth in the idea that the serial writing in Obsessionnel is ironic, as suggested both by the tempo marking of that movement²⁴ and the scherzando style of some of the scoring, there would not appear to be any such irony here. A more likely

²⁴ The idea is put forward by Mari (173: 186) and also by Roger Nichols (1991-2).

interpretation, in view of the epigraph to the movement 'et dans cette nature étrange et symbolique', is that Dutilleux was exploring Baudelaire's fascination with the potentially poetic and mysterious aspects of strict mathematical procedures (see, for example, Culler 1993: xxii-xxiii).

Enigme is the third piece by Dutilleux to be labelled in the score as 'variations', together with the Choral et Variations from the piano sonata and the Finale con variazione from the first symphony. Both the previous movements, as we have seen, reveal a thoroughly unconventional attitude towards variation form, developing large sections with no harmonic or formal relation to the 'theme', and often little motivic relation to it either. By comparison, the present movement conforms much more closely to a conventional understanding of the term. Although the 'theme' presented in the opening section (figs 5-8) is really only one of two themes providing the motivic material for the rest of the movement, the relation of at least the first three variations to it is relatively traditional. Moreover, in these three variations there is even a vestige of the same harmonic scheme as the 'theme' section, in the repeated movement from F# to C. Another factor, which remains valid despite the unconventional interweaving of material from theme A,

is that the sections sound like variations, in their similarity of length and form, and the progressive relation of texture and rhythmic pulse from one section to the next. The same cannot be said, for example, of the finale to the first symphony. It is perhaps indicative of Dutilleux's attitude to thematic writing that, while the variations are labelled in the score, what I have called the 'theme' section is not labelled as such. Dutilleux has remarked concerning an earlier work that 'the thematic elements only take their definitive form progressively'²⁵ and in Enigme this is literally true, as we have seen, in the way that both A and E were gradually built up from their opening notes. In the section from figs 5 to 8 the markings in the score, like the phrases themselves, do not announce the theme definitively, but allow it to emerge in the course of the music.

ii) Regard

Despite the marked change of mood, most of the material of this movement has already been introduced. The pitch focus, on A in the melody and G# in the bass, is carried over from the end of variation 4, while the descending contour of the cello's lyrical melody, alternately

25 'les éléments thématiques ne prennent leur profil définitif que progressivement' (quoted in Mari 1973: 166, with reference to the second symphony).

conjunct and gapped, derives from B in the opening cadenza. The bass figure which punctuates the melody and articulates the bass-note G#¹ has been prefigured at figs 15-17, and even the last notes of the cello phrase in bar 5, whose distinctive contour (b¹, a¹, g², g#¹) becomes central to this movement, may be argued to have developed from the cadence into fig. 15 (see Humbert 1985: 121).

One element is new, however, and brings a new technique into play in Dutilleux's music: the four chords of b. 3, repeated and developed in b. 4 and throughout the rest of the movement (see ex. 3.17). The chords, phrased in pairs, divide into two layers like many of Dutilleux's more complex harmonies. What is new is that the two chords comprise complementary hexachords, so that each pair of chords sounds the total chromatic. Moreover, the second pair of chords is the same as the first except that the layers have been reversed: this means that, within each layer, the second pair of chords gives the hexachord complementary to that of the first pair, and across the phrase of four chords each layer sounds the total chromatic too. The intervals and hexachords involved remain a strictly harmonic phenomenon, and do not derive from any of the row forms in the first movement; they are also kept separate from linear writing, just as the linear series in the first movement was kept distinct from

harmonic writing.

Ex. 3.17 Harmony based on complementary hexachords

Tout un monde lointain..., ii

iii) Houles and iv) Miroirs

A short interlude, consisting of reminiscences of the cadenza theme A followed by the chord theme scored for winds and percussion, leads to a powerful octave D, establishing the new harmonic focus for Houles. The opening idea of this movement (theme D) was briefly heard in the introduction to the first movement, and is now given expansive treatment. At fig. 47 a new figure is introduced, discreetly, like almost all new ideas in the piece, as a countermelody to the main theme D in the bassoons; it is later taken up in the piccolo (fig. 48-9). The movement falls into two halves, roughly equal in length, and strongly contrasted in tempo, although a smooth transition is effected between them; the second half (from fig. 52) drops the bass focus on D (alternating with Ab) which runs throughout the first half, and is less stable harmonically, moving through passages in which the bass is anchored on E (fig. 52-4), C# (fig. 55-6) and F (fig. 57).

This final passage gradually prepares the material for the next movement: Miroirs opens with a series of chords on harp, later muted brass, and a marimba figure which ultimately derives from theme E, but which grows out of the preceding music. Its contour is first suggested in

the skirling woodwind anacrusis to fig. 53, and then becomes a little more prominent in a slower and more even rhythm played by the solo cello at figs 57-8 before coming to the foreground, and losing almost all rhythmic definition, in the coda (from fig. 60). From fig. 57 two chords alternate above the F bass; the second of these is taken up by the harp as the starting point of the following movement.

Miroirs has a similar position in the work as a whole to that of Torpide in Métaboles, and the two movements have some interesting points in common: muted brass and percussion provide the chief timbres, while both harmonic sequences are derived from six-note pitch collections (see ex. 3.2i and ii on p. 199 above). They are nonetheless very different in structure and aim, with Miroirs developing into a more complex and substantial movement than that formed by the deliberately impoverished and inert material of Torpide. The six-note collection used in Miroirs (C, D#, F#, G, Ab, B) is not dominated by a whole-tone scale, like that in Torpide, and has a far greater variety of possible harmonic implications, particularly if divided up into triadic layers in the way that is so typical of Dutilleux's harmonies in general. After fig. 62 it is also inflected by other pitches, which contribute to a feeling of harmonic development strongly

contrasted to the effect of Torpide. These other pitches are also introduced via the marimba figure (theme E), which at first derives from the same pitch collection, but at fig. 62 is extended, in an almost exact restatement of its full twelve-note form in the first movement. The same, slowly increasing complexity of pitch content can be observed in the solo cello melody, whose independent and free development of the marimba's contour gradually gives greater emphasis to complementary pitches such as e#' and d'. This solo cello melody, together with its derivative high in the first violins from b. 15 on, constitutes perhaps the most immediate and telling contrast with Torpide, which is premised on the absence of any main central line, and the closeness of the music to silence.

Miroirs has the most insistent and unvaried tonal focus of any of the movements in Tout un monde, present almost throughout as a trill between b and c', always ending on the b. As in the other movements, its tritonal opposite provides a secondary focus in the F' at fig. 64. In the passage which follows C# is established and at fig. 66 a climactic twelve-note chord is built up (twelve notes excluding the trills) but this chord still contains the b/c' trill, which is then only absent for four bars before the opening ideas return to round off the movement. In another interlude the chord theme returns again, now

scored for percussion with strings, but this time moving a step beyond the octave D which introduced Houles and culminating in the entrance of the full orchestra over a bass C#, which provides the focus for the last movement Hymne.

v) Hymne

Underlying the whole scheme of this concentrated and energetic movement is a shift of emphasis which is both harmonic and registral, from the bass C# of the first half of the movement (from figs 70 to 85) to the G in the middle and upper register which dominates from fig. 86 to the end. The lack of bass focus towards the end is important in preparing for the evaporation of harmony and texture in the final bars, which do not so much conclude as vanish out of hearing. Harmonic stability is first introduced into the upper lines (principally the cello part) at figs 78-81: here the focus is b' over an F#' bass. When the bass returns to C# at fig. 82, the cello melody introduces for the first time in the movement the melodic focus on g' which assumes greater and greater importance from here on as the bass part becomes both less emphatic and more sporadic.

Although most of the ideas in Hymne can be traced back to earlier material, from fig. 76 onwards Dutilleux

concentrates particularly on evoking the textures as well as the motives of the previous movements. At fig. 77, for example, the variations are recalled by theme E played pizzicato in the second violins and the cello line from figs 25-6 in the first violins, again in high staccato repeated notes. At fig. 79 the melody from Regard is recalled by the cello and woodwind, with its gapped descending scale and expansive cadence figure in minor and major sevenths, while the convergence of texture and harmony at figs 81-2 recalls fig. 37 from that movement. The g' focus at fig. 82 is provided by a melody from Houles (see fig. 47ff), while references to the fourth movement Miroirs often evoke its harmonies and chordal spacings (e.g. fig. 78, and also the final harmony).

As in Métaboles, the last movement gathers together strands from all the preceding movements in a synthesis of exhilarating momentum. It stands in a different relation to the rest of the work, however, for whereas in Métaboles the last movement Flamboyant draws together previously distinct material for the first time in the work, in Tout un monde the preceding movements have been developed from the very beginning out of a much more continuous interweaving of the same thematic and harmonic elements, and so the importance of the movement is to provide some kind of gesture which will justify bringing this ongoing

process to a close. At the same time, the idea of a tonal 'resolution' began to seem increasingly inappropriate to Dutilleux - it was shortly after completing this work that he altered the final C# major chord of the second symphony - and his solution is not to bring the developments to a halt but to suggest that they are continuing elsewhere, beyond the range of this particular work or performance. The ending goes a step further than even the most unresolved and complex final harmonies of some of Dutilleux's other movements towards the idea of an open, incomplete form.

Conclusion

'Admittedly, Métaboles was a considerable step forward for me, but it did not break with the explorations of my previous symphonies'.²⁶ This comment shows how, even in what was perhaps the most radical reassessment of his compositional technique, Dutilleux's underlying aims remained consistent. With Métaboles Dutilleux introduced a new rigour into his writing, a rational consistency which sometimes runs alongside, sometimes wholly replaces the freely instinctive variation and synthesis of his earlier works. But despite this, and despite choosing not

26 'Je l'avoue, ces Métaboles sont pour moi une étape importante, mais qui ne brise pas cependant avec mes recherches symphoniques précédentes', quoted in Mari 1973: 93.

to call Métaboles a 'symphony' (or Tout un monde a 'concerto'),²⁷ Dutilleux was still pursuing his ideal of writing a 'symphonic work' (see his comments quoted on p. 105-6 above), with the continuity and coherence that that implies. Arguably, Métaboles goes as far as any of Dutilleux's works in challenging that idea of coherence (until Mystère de l'instant of 1989) because of the considerable independence of the different movements: the transitions between them are smooth in terms of texture,²⁸ but to a large extent the material and the compositional techniques which characterise each movement are unrelated.

In his next major work Dutilleux maintained the concentration and focus of Métaboles in his handling of harmonic and motivic ideas. But, despite the apparent similarity of the five-movement form, the relation of the movements to each other in Tout un monde is quite different from that in the earlier work, and is the result of a dense network of allusion and reminiscence. Two factors may have affected this reversion to long-standing

27 Not using the word 'concerto' as a subtitle for Tout un monde was a conscious decision of the composer's, and contrasts with L'arbre des songes which is called a concerto; see Dutilleux 1993: 161.

28 From Linéaire on; between movements i and ii there is not even any transition in terms of texture.

interests after the experimentation of Métaboles.²⁹ Since Dutilleux likes to conceive of his elaboration of motivic relationships as exploring the workings of memory (see Dutilleux 1993: 102-4), writing for a solo instrument may have provided a natural metaphor for the individual consciousness whose memory he could explore.

The second factor is the work's background in the composer's re-reading of Baudelaire. Though Dutilleux is always anxious to stress that there is no direct relationship and no illustration of the poetry in the music (e.g. Dutilleux 1993: 124), the introspective and self-communing nature of the poems he quotes from may still have provided a model for the ramification of motives at a purely formal level, even while he shunned a programmatic response. Be this as it may, Tout un monde lointain... remains one of Dutilleux's most imaginative and richly coloured works, in which technical restraint and discipline are triumphantly justified by the freedom and luxuriant variety of the result.

29 Humbert writes of Métaboles: 'it is an experiment'. ('[C]'est une expérience' (Humbert 1985: 110)).

Chapter 4

Night music:two works from the 1970s.Introduction

By comparison with the two pieces discussed in chapter 3, Dutilleux's music in the 1970s took on a more sombre shade, reining in the extrovert brilliance of parts of Métaboles (such as movements iii and v) and the ardently emotional tone of some of the solo writing in Tout un monde lointain... The darker qualities of the two main works of the 1970s, the string quartet Ainsi la nuit (1973-6) and the orchestral piece Timbres, espace, mouvement (1976-8), are suggested by the nocturnal titles of both works (Timbres is subtitled La nuit étoilée after Van Gogh's painting of the same name) as well as in many aspects of their musical language.

In this chapter, after a sketch of the biographical background to the writing of these works, I shall consider in general terms the most characteristic features of Dutilleux's musical response to the night, including an increased interest in texture and the disposition of music in registral space, new developments in Dutilleux's harmonic language, thematic ideas and formal structures. The two works are then examined individually. In Ainsi la

nuît I propose an overall progression underlying its apparently whimsical succession of movements, and then, because these movements are so intricately interconnected and at the same time not overtly distinguished from each other (in contrast to the clearly articulated movements of both Métaboles and Tout un monde, for example), I examine each in turn, giving particular attention to the first movement which is the source of so many motivic and harmonic ideas in the remainder of the work. The larger scale of Timbres, espace, mouvement and the greater degree of independence between its two large movements led me to take a different course, giving an overview of the form of the whole work and some of its most characteristic features before examining the first movement in more detail.

Biographical background

After the composition of the first two of the Figures de Résonances for two pianos and Tout un monde lointain..., both premièred in 1970, the pace of Dutilleux's output slowed for a few years. One reason for this may have been his increased teaching commitments,¹ but a more important

¹ While continuing his duties at the Ecole Normale Dutilleux agreed to take over the composition course at the Conservatoire when André Jolivet left in 1970 (Dutilleux 1993: 117).

and disturbing distraction was caused by the composer's eye illness, which became so severe that at one stage he risked losing the sight of his left eye altogether. The recommendation of a specialist surgeon by Paul Sacher led to an operation in January 1972 which restored him to better health and put an end to the problems which had been plaguing him since 1965 (Dutilleux 1993: 117). At the same time he retired from his teaching posts, and in 1973 completed the first version of two piano preludes, and wrote three studies for string quartet entitled Nuits. These were eventually incorporated into the final version of the work, Ainsi la nuit, which he completed in 1976 (see Potter 1997: 18, 162-9). In the same year he also completed the remaining two movements of Figures de Résonances, wrote Hommage à Paul Sacher for solo cello, and began work on a new orchestral piece, which he completed in 1978. Even without taking into consideration smaller pieces completed in the years 1973-6, the two major works of the 1970s appeared closer together than any other of Dutilleux's large-scale scores, and this is reflected in their similarity of theme, for all their differences of medium and scale.

Night music

The nocturnal themes of both Ainsi la nuit and Timbres,

espace , mouvement centre on the night sky, with all the elemental and inhuman processes and trajectories traced by planets, stars and constellations. This is clearly apparent from Dutilleux's description of the Van Gogh painting invoked by the subtitle of Timbres, La nuit étoilée, and by some of the movement titles from Ainsi la nuit such as Miroir d'espace and Constellations.

I strove by the interplay of sounds to give the impression of great space which had been suggested to me by that extraordinary, visionary painting by Vincent van Gogh, La nuit étoilée. ... [T]hough I reject futile illustration, I had felt that the throbbing intensity animating these canvasses, their prevailing sense of space, their vibrant material, and above all the effect of almost cosmic vibration they produce could find equivalents in the field of sound. (2)

Dutilleux's fascination with the motion of bodies in outer space, devoid of human intentions or emotions, led him to develop a musical language in which motivic and contrapuntal elaboration of material often take second place to more elemental ways of characterising sonorities, both individually and massed together. Dynamics, for example, play a prominent part in certain passages in defining each individual sonority, and the dynamics are not conceived in relation to the norm pertaining to a

2 This translation is taken from Dutilleux 1994: 3, and the original French is given on 16-17, copyright Phillips Classics Productions 1994.

particular passage, but in terms of the full dynamic range, as when single chords move between pianissimo and fortissimo (ex. 4.1).

Ex. 4.1 Exploitation of the full dynamic range

Assez lent

Ainsi la nuit, i, fig. 4 + 1

The musical score for 'Ainsi la nuit' by Henri Dutilleux, first movement, figure 4 + 1. The tempo is marked 'Assez lent'. The score is in 4/4 time and features two staves. The first staff has dynamics ff, f, ff, pp, ff, pp, ff, and ppp. The second staff has dynamics f, ffpp, pp, ff, and p. The final measure is marked 'ppp un poco vibrato'.

Similarly, there is an increasing tendency to conceive the registral outline of the musical ideas, not in relation to a prevailing range, but with reference to the highest and lowest extremes of the full registral spectrum. In a gesture which occurs repeatedly in Ainsi la nuit, a narrow band of sound suddenly splits apart in a rapid centrifugal movement (usually in parallel with a diminuendo to pianissimo). Dutilleux seems to find this particular figure best suited to solo and chamber string writing, and so in the wind-dominated orchestra of Timbres he finds other ways to connect upper, lower and central registers (see ex. 4.2 on p. 265 below). He also puts to more systematic and extensive use his interest in lines placed at opposite registral extremes, shown briefly in Regard from Tout un monde. These can also be heard as boundaries defining a largely empty registral space, and

the concept of both the sonorities and the gaps above or below them being defined by lines or sustained notes which act as audible boundaries becomes increasingly important in both these works. Numerous passages seem to be conceived in these essentially visual terms, such as when an empty space is gradually filled out, either from the top downwards, as in the opening bars of Timbres, or from the centre outwards, as at fig. 17 later in the same movement. Equally, the boundaries of the sonority can be heard to contract, reducing the registral area 'filled' with sound from a wide range to a point (i.e. a single pitch), as at fig. 6 -4 (see also figs 8-9 and 14-15, whose sonorities converge onto bare octaves rather than a single pitch).

Given this concern for defining and filling different areas of registral space, it is not surprising that clusters play a noticeable part in these scores, although they did not feature previously in Dutilleux's harmonic language. A fully chromatic cluster represents the densest and most literal way to fill the space between two registral boundaries, but Dutilleux's chromatic clusters always include 'gaps', i.e. larger intervals such as the occasional minor thirds in the dense opening harmony of Timbres. He also uses clusters based on a diatonic or other mode, with a mixture of major and minor second

steps: these allow him to maintain some degree of individual harmonic characterisation for different sonorities, and also allow for a play of changing densities by varying the number and width of the gaps. While individual harmonies can be described in this way as 'diatonic', successive chords rarely derive from a common source collection, like the pandiatonic harmonies of ex. 1.4 on p. 35-6 above; indeed, adjacent harmonies are often sharply contrasting in pitch content. At this level of detail Dutilleux's harmonic organisation is now effectively atonal, even if strong focal pitches are still used to articulate form on the large scale.

Continuing in the direction of decreasing density of sonority and increasing definition of harmonic character, Dutilleux makes much use of fourth-chords, sometimes inverted as superimposed fifths to cover an even wider registral area. These are a familiar element from his previous works, of course, but now they are integrated into a full range of post-tonal harmonic types conceived according to intervallic content, with its textural implication of varying densities of sonority (see ex. 4.2).

**Ex. 4.2 Fourth and fifth chords;
variation in the density of chord spacings.**

Timbres, Espace, Mouvement, i.

(i) *Très libre*
fig. 14
(upper woodwind omitted)
mf *f*

(ii)
mf *cresc.* *f marc.*
fig. 34

Though it would be misleading to imply that the writing in these scores is absolutely different from his earlier works, these resources allow Dutilleux to give spacing, register, boundaries and dynamics and other aspects of texture, such as contrasts in timbre, a much more prominent role, so that melody, and even pitch emphasis and harmonic definition, sometimes become less important. They make an effective analogy for contrasts of brightness and darkness, density and void, fields of attraction and repulsion, and the movement of the celestial bodies, often serene, sometimes violent, always implacable and devoid of human intention or emotion.

But there is another element in these works, severely restrained by comparison with earlier works, but all the more striking for its emotional intensity when it does appear. This is a more lyrical and cantabile kind of

writing, characterised by expressive melodic lines, a reduced registral range, and a more straightforward relationship to metre and rhythmic regularities: all these factors bring this music closer to human song and to the instinctive emotional responses it can provoke. Given the way that the composer describes his own reaction to Van Gogh's painting, such passages in general may represent a human, emotional response to the marvels and mysteries of the night sky, whether real or painted. Certainly they provide a means of combining Dutilleux's fascination for inorganic, non-human processes and trajectories with the more elusive web of feelings, memories and perceptions which have always characterised his work.

One of the simplest and most easily memorable melodic motives in these works is introduced for the first time in Ainsi la nuit, but recurs in Timbres, and is to become a recurrent feature of Dutilleux's later scores: it is a melodic play on three notes spanning a major third in whole-tone steps, which I shall refer to as the 'bell-theme'. It is equally prone to free elaboration as part of a larger harmonic and textural complex or to a simpler presentation accompanied by a homophonic harmonisation: in the latter instances it suggests a continuation of Dutilleux's interest in the 'chorale', with its solemn and spiritual connotations.

Ex. 4.3 'Bell' theme

(i) *Assez lent* Ainsi la nuit, i.

(cello) fig. 1

pp <> <> <> *sim.* $\text{♩} = 3$

(ii) Timbres, Espace, Mouvement, ii.

fig. 23

ff

Designing his music to pursue analogies with elemental physical phenomena and with the interweavings of human perception and memory, Dutilleux now has little use for traditional formal models, and he has even set aside the Bartókian symmetrical designs of *Métaboles* and *Tout un monde*. *Ainsi la nuit* and *Timbres* are almost alone in Dutilleux's oeuvre in adopting the form of two equally weighted sections. In the case of *Ainsi la nuit* this is disguised, and Dutilleux's penchant for odd numbers indulged (see Mari 1988: 158) by the division into seven main movements, but these are all joined into a continuous flow and there is only one substantial pause in the work, about halfway through, after *Litanies*. Within each half, the beginnings of different movements are generally no more overtly articulated than, for example, the four

sections of each movement in Timbres outlined in the analysis later in this chapter. Although the diptych design of both works is very imposing, it is not a form³ which Dutilleux has chosen to explore further; indeed, his later addition of an interlude to Timbres serves to disguise the division, maintaining continuity between the two movements.

Ainsi la nuit

This work for string quartet was commissioned by the Koussevitsky foundation, and was first performed by the Parrenin Quartet in Paris in January 1977, and then in the Library of Congress in Washington by the Juilliard quartet in April 1978. Since then it has become one of the most frequently performed string quartets written in the last thirty years, and one of the most recorded (with versions by eight different groups), despite the work's great technical challenges. Dutilleux has linked the difficulty this work presents, for players and audiences alike, with the complexity of its form, and suggested that this 'resistant' quality increases the work's interest. Listening to the Parrenin quartet rehearse the work, 'I

3 The two movements of Les citations are a rather different case, since the first was originally written to stand alone, and the second only added later (Dutilleux 1993: 169-71).

wondered sometimes if I hadn't got it wrong, if I hadn't pushed the speculations too far, taken too many risks. ... [But] I often say that the pieces which give me least cause for regret are those in which I have taken the most risks. ... My quartet is one of those [scores] which enabled me to go a little further.'⁴ Numerous critics have agreed with this verdict, beginning with Jacques Lonchampt in his review of the first performance (1977). Stephane Goldet ranks it alongside quartets by Carter and Ligeti (1986: 7), while Humbert finds in it 'Dutilleux's most subtle elaboration of form' and Mari writes of its originality of structure and of how it pushes 'at the limits of abstraction'.⁵

By comparison with Dutilleux's typically sensuous handling of the orchestral palette in his previous orchestral works, the sonorities of his string quartet are often harsh and bare, and the changes of texture and dynamic unusually abrupt. The desire to give such sonorities a

4 'Je me demandais parfois si je ne m'étais pas trompé, si je n'avais pas poussé trop loin des spéculations, pris trop de risques. ... Je dis souvent que les oeuvres qui me laissent le moins de regrets sont celles pour lesquelles j'ai pris le plus de risques. ... [C]ette partition ... est de celles qui m'ont permis d'aller un peu plus loin' (Dutilleux 1993: 143-4).

5 'l'élaboration formelle la plus subtile de Dutilleux' (Humbert 1985: 209); 'une partition à la limite de l'abstraction' (Mari 1988: 163).

central place in his musical language may be a legacy of writing Figures de Résonances (1970), in which the instrumental resources are treated in an uncompromisingly experimental manner. For all that they give the work a more progressive character than much of Dutilleux's music, the most exploratory textures often show the influence of earlier modernists, and particularly two of the most innovative of twentieth-century composers for string quartet, Bartók and Berg. Dutilleux's piece can be seen as continuing a kind of nocturnal music which dates back to Bartók's slow movements from the 1920s on, and the string quartet textures developed particularly in the slow movements of the fourth and fifth quartets. Typical features of these movements include static or slowly moving notes or chords, pianissimo, against which tiny flutterings and insect-like rustlings stand out. Berg's Lyric Suite is also a formative influence, especially for its textural innovations, such as the trio in the fifth movement, in which static, held clusters, pianissimo, are violently and unexpectedly interrupted by abrupt⁶ fortissimo chords.

⁶ Dutilleux has admitted the strong influence of the Lyric Suite in an interview with Roger Nichols (cited in Potter 1997: 75); as with the Bartók quartets mentioned above, another important aspect of this influence concerns formal structure, and particularly Berg's and Bartók's use of symmetry: arch-forms, inversions, and retrogrades.

Form

More than any other of the composer's works, Ainsi la nuit gives the impression of being a free elaboration and exploration of the musical material, not conceived to fit any pre-ordained scheme. After the clear-cut movements of Métaboles, each with its own distinct tempo, scoring and mood, Tout un monde lointain already showed a noticeable shift in the direction of a more fluid and interwoven continuity. Although it still has five separate movements, each with their own character, they are all derived, to a much greater extent than Métaboles, from a common set of motives; there are also some linking sections which explicitly recall earlier material while making a transition between movements. Ainsi la nuit takes these developments further. There are seven movements, and also four parenthèses,⁷ as well as two other short, unnamed sections. Given that total duration is the shortest of any of Dutilleux's major works (a little over fifteen minutes) this already makes for a much more rapid interchange of tempi and styles. But the material is so thoroughly interrelated that, even within one movement, a given idea can easily lead to any number

⁷ These are the opening 8 bars, and the 5 bars from fig. 12 -2 to the beginning of Nocturne 2.

of others, often highly contrasted in effect, with the result that the notion of a single mood or 'affect' for each movement, still largely applicable in Dutilleux's music up to Tout un monde lointain..., is considerably eroded in this work.

The parenthèses which come between the first five movements are parenthetical more in position than in content. They are not a composed substitute for the random coughs and shuffles that would otherwise intervene between movements, like the intermèdes in Lutosławski's Livre pour orchestre or between the third and fourth movements of Dutilleux's later L'arbre des songes: that is, they are no less densely composed than the main movements around them, and, for a listener without a score, they would be indistinguishable from the rest of the music. Dutilleux has described their role as follows:

These "parentheses" ... were intended to play an organic role. ... [They] announce motives which may be used in the following movement, or which may not be used until two movements further on, or again which may be reminiscent of what has already occurred. The workings of memory play a large part here, as in

most of my compositions. (8)

In a later interview Dutilleux mentions how his idea of 'memory' in the composition and perception of music connects with his admiration for the style and subject-matter of Proust's novel A la recherche du temps perdu, a topic which I have discussed at greater length elsewhere (Dutilleux 1993: 102-3; Thurlow 1997: 71-91). In this work Dutilleux finds in contemplating the night another opportunity to explore the unconscious and the role of memory in feeling and perception. He creates a quasi-organic web of relationships, both overt and elusive, which draws together all the varied themes and textures of the work. As a result there is, almost from the very beginning, a continual equivocation between the notions of statement, restatement and development which gives the work some of its mystery and fascination, inviting the listener to get lost in its form: for the same reason, the work is not easy to grasp analytically.

8 '... des parenthèses ... qui étaient appelées à jouer un rôle organique. ... ces parenthèses énoncent des motifs qui seront parfois utilisés dans la pièce plus loin, ou bien encore évoqueront ce qui s'est passé auparavant. Le processus de la mémoire y joue un grand rôle comme dans la plupart de mes partitions' (Surchamp 1983: 16).

Previous analytical approaches

The analysis by Daniel Humbert is more detailed than Stéphane Goldet's or Pierrette Mari's, but all discuss the work movement by movement, without considering it as a whole, or admitting that the divisions which define these movements could be easily mistaken without the help of a score. They are mostly taken up with describing the successive themes and textures of each movement and pointing out some of the motivic transformations (Humbert 1985: 154-74; Goldet 1986: 113-6; Mari 1988: 158-63). For categorising the different motives and their transformations, however, the analytical chart by Francis Bayer is more helpful, though it too offers little interpretation of the overall structure (Bayer 1990); Caroline Potter's table of interrelations is also informative (Potter 1997: 72-5).

Potter is the only one of these authors to make any significant comment about the overall shape of the work. She points out that the two pairs of movements sharing similar titles (i.e. Nocturne and Nocturne 2, Litanies and Litanies 2) are positioned symmetrically, implying 'circularity on several levels' (: 75), but observes, too, that these symmetries are only imperfectly completed by the final chord (: 117). This is an important aspect of the work's design, and was surely affected by Dutilleux's

interest in Berg's Lyric suite, as she rightly indicates (: 75), as well as Bartók's fourth and fifth quartets.

By plotting the use of pivot-notes across the work, Potter also finds a long-range '"unfolding" of a D-major triad (from D to F# to A)', which is corroborated, she suggests, by an occurrence of the full D-major diatonic collection, produced by the momentary overlap of two chords in Parenthèse 4 (it reappears once later on, when the same passage returns in Temps suspendu) (: 113-17). While I personally remain unconvinced by this 'connection between the tonal background and foreground harmony'

⁹
(: 116), Potter is surely right to see the overall form

9 While agreeing that D acts as a focal pitch, I question whether the occurrence of the D major diatonic collection is relevant. It is only one of several such collections produced by overlapping chords in Temps suspendu, as Potter notes, and in any case diatonic collections have been a recurring element in Dutilleux's harmony since Métaboles (see ex. 3.7 on p. 219 above, for example). Nonetheless, in Ainsi these harmonies are much less prominent than several others, such as the chords of themes A or C (see exx. 4.4 and 4.7 on pp. 278 and 285 below).

Although there are instances where Dutilleux sounds diatonic collections as chords in their own right, the present instance is a rather weak example, comprising only a brief overlap between two different chords, of which the *pp* chord is likely to emerge only after the *ff* chord has ceased, creating a slightly blurred effect. For all these reasons, as well as the differences in the two composers' 'harmonic vocabulary', it seems bizarre of Potter to claim 'a direct parallel' between Dutilleux's effect here and Beethoven's emphatic dissonance at the opening of the finale to his ninth symphony (: 116).

as a combination of static symmetries with a more dynamic, non-symmetrical progression through a sequence of focal pitch centres, and these are the two structural principles which underlie my own analysis of the work.

A succession of pitch centres

The continuous interlinking of movements and parenthèses is broken at just one point, after the dramatic conclusion to the third movement Litanies 1 with a long pause described as 'importante' in a note at the beginning of the score. This creates the overall bipartite division¹⁰ mentioned above. Within these two sections, the division into separate movements reflects not only the general shifts of texture, tempo and mood (with many interruptions and contradictory details, as indicated above), but also marks stages in an ongoing progression between three main areas of harmonic and pitch emphasis. These are distributed across registral space, so that they provide a specific pitch characterisation for different registral areas.

¹⁰ The similarity to the two-part form of Timbres, Espace, Mouvement is underlined by the way that the first part of Ainsi la nuit ends on a fortissimo sustained unison D, as does the first movement of the later work.

The work opens with a palindromic 'chord-theme': five chords rising and then falling back to where they began (chords A1-A5, see ex. 4.4). The first of these chords is always the most frequently reiterated, and combines two of the pitch emphases which are to provide landmarks in the remainder of the work.¹¹ The bass-note of the chord, C#, is articulated more clearly than is typical with bass-notes in Dutilleux's harmonies from this period, because of the unusually simple 'root-position' layout of the lower three pitches which resonate with it. Nonetheless, it does not become individually prominent as a focal pitch until the second movement and Parenthèse 2. The top note of the chord, d', tends to be articulated as a focal pitch through its central position in a freely symmetrical harmonic context. Here it is sustained throughout the opening chords while they rise above it, so that it forms the highest pitch of chord A1 and the lowest of chord A5. It continues to be sustained as a central pedal throughout the opening section of the ensuing Nocturne (to fig. 4), where it is accompanied by one or both of its whole-tone neighbours c' and e'. It plays a similar role in numerous

11 In an interview which I recorded with the composer in July 1994, Dutilleux told me that this opening chord was derived from a cycle of ascending perfect fifths: C#, G#, d#, a#, f', c", g", d'''. He did not comment on the omission of the d# and a# from the chord he ultimately used, which may be felt to clarify the polarity between the top and bottom of the chord.

passages later in the work.

Ex. 4.4 Theme A

Ainsi la nuit, i, opening

Chords: A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 A4 A3 A2 A1

Libre et souple

pp ————— *(f)* *pp* *pp* < *f*

The third focal pitch is hinted at in the closing bars of the first movement (from fig. 10), but only becomes strongly emphasised later in the work. This is pitch-class A, usually appearing in the upper register as a" or a'", although it acts in a greater variety of thematic and harmonic contexts than the other two pitch focuses, sometimes providing a pitch focus in the middle register as a or a'. The succession of these three pitch emphases hinted at in the Nocturne (together with the eight bars which precede it) prefigures a similar pattern which underlies the whole work as far as the penultimate movement, after which point the tonal focus of the music becomes more transitory.

At the opening and in Parenthèse 1 C# is only present

as the bass of chord A1, but in Miroir d'espace it becomes more obviously highlighted, and at the end of the movement all four instruments come together onto high C#s (the first of three such moments of pitch unanimity). In the third movement, Litanies 1, the opening chord-theme is extended to reach from the C# bass of chord A1 to a new chord which features a" as the highpoint of the upper lines' repeatedly ascending gestures. This movement, and the first of the work's two larger sections, ends with the central focus d' emerging in a powerful unison. In Parenthèse 3 and Litanies 2 the focus is on A (in various different registers), and after the rapidly shifting harmonies of Parenthèse 4 it reappears with increasing intensity in Constellations (from fig. 3 +3), culminating in the fortissimo A octaves at the end of the movement. Although the A focus continues at the beginning of the following movement, Nocturne 2, from here on the clarity of pitch focus dissolves, and the high a"" in the last bar is more part of a gesture of disintegration than a focal pitch. In the final movement reminiscences of the opening give a 'cyclic' character to the end of the work, bringing back chord A1 and a brief return of symmetrical harmonies structured around a central d'. But in the closing bars these, too, are abandoned and the final chord, though similar to A1 in texture and layout, is unexpectedly new in its specific pitch and intervallic content.

Each of the three pitch focuses is given more emphatic and extended treatment than the last, and the order and character of the seven movements may be seen to reflect this progression. The C# focus dominates only one main movement (Miroir d'espace) which is (mostly) slow and quiet, culminating in an ethereal pianissimo. The d' focus extends over part of the slow and lyrical Nocturne, and then returns in the more insistent and energetic Litanies, culminating in the fortissimo unison which ends the first part. After the pause, the A focus then governs the opening Parenthèse 3, the slow and lyrical Litanies 2 and the faster and ultimately forceful Constellations which culminates in the climactic octave As, and even continues beyond this point into the beginning of the following movement, Nocturne 2, before dissolving into a kaleidoscope of harmonic change which matches the evanescent texture of this elusive movement.

These are the terms in which a broad and relatively simple progression may be felt to underline the work's

12

complex sequence of movements and textures. Nonetheless, because of the network of motivic interrelations described above, these three pitch focuses form only one element in a formal dialectic which covers and confuses this progression as much as it articulates them, as if it was itself governed by the interactions of memory and perception in an imaginary experience of listening. In the following discussion of the individual movements, while trying to discern the formal structure of each, I will also consider the motivic material and try to trace some of the connections, similarities and continuities which are woven through the piece.

i) Opening section and Nocturne

After its initial presentation (shown in ex. 4.4 above), the chord-theme A is immediately reworked in what Bayer calls a 'déploiement polyphonique' (1990), with the pitches of each chord broken up into pizzicato arpeggiations (theme A', see ex. 4.5). The reworking also

12 There is a broad area of agreement between my scheme and Caroline Potter's, in which the tonal focus moves from D (e.g. Litanies) through F# (e.g. Litanies 2) to A (Constellations) (Potter 1997: 114-5). I agree that F# is important in Litanies 2, forming a dual melodic focus together with A, but it is never singled out for unison pitch emphasis as are C#, D and A, each of which provides one of the clearest landmarks in the work: this is why I include C# and not F# as a primary focus in the overall progression.

transforms the closed palindromic sequence into an open, inconclusive one, progressing to new harmonies rather than turning back, and dropping the d' pedal which had been sustained up to that point. Thus, these bars immediately present two quite opposite images, the sonority and layout of the opening chords giving an impression of stability and coherence which suddenly dissolves into a scattering of fragments.

Ex. 4.5 Theme A'

The musical score for Theme A' is written for piano and pizzicato. The piano part is in 3/4 time and features a series of chords labeled A3, A4, A5 (A2'), A3, and (A1'). The pizzicato part is marked 'pizz.' and 'mf'. The score includes various musical markings such as 'mf', 'pizz.', and 'mf'. The piano part has a series of chords labeled A3, A4, A5 (A2'), A3, and (A1'). The pizzicato part has a series of chords labeled A3, A4, A5 (A2'), A3, and (A1'). The score includes various musical markings such as 'mf', 'pizz.', and 'mf'. The piano part has a series of chords labeled A3, A4, A5 (A2'), A3, and (A1'). The pizzicato part has a series of chords labeled A3, A4, A5 (A2'), A3, and (A1').

The form of the Nocturne falls into two roughly equal halves (dividing at fig. 5) which, despite the differences in their harmonic and motivic material, are comparable in terms of their overall dynamic: in each, an extended passage of continuous development within a well-defined harmonic field reaches a climax, followed by more fragmentary, inconclusive material. In the first of these two sections (from b. 9; fig. 1 -2) there is a gradual but

sustained development in terms of registral expansion, harmony, texture and melodic decoration which builds to the fortissimo climax at fig. 4. The components of this harmonic and registral expansion are shown in ex. 4.6. Its central drone (c'-d'-e') develops a sonority already contained in the opening chord in the first violin's c'-d' (and expanded via the c#'-d#' at fig. C); similarly, the motives explored above and below this drone by cello and first violin expand from a major second to a major third comprising two whole-tone steps (motive B: see ex. 4.3i. This is the first of the 'bell themes' discussed on p.

Ex. 4.6 Harmonic expansion in the Nocturne

Ainsi la nuit, i,
beginning to fig. 4 (reduction)

8

8

Theme B

perfect fifth

major second

266-7 above, and which become more prominent in Timbres, Espace, Mouvement and later works.) As the harmony expands, the superimposed major seconds are combined with the perfect fifths of the instruments' open strings, contributing further to the intervallic and textural reminiscences of chord-theme A with which this passage is coloured.

Following the climax at fig. 4, two further ideas are introduced, both developed out of the immediately preceding material, like most of the motives and harmonies of the work. Each appears only briefly, repeatedly surging from pianissimo to fortissimo within a few beats; thus, they replace the steady growth which has characterised the Nocturne so far with the explosive instability of the scattered pizzicati from the introduction (c.f. fig. B +2).

The first of the new ideas is the series of overlapping chords which follow immediately in b. 18 (fig. 4 +1; motive C), and the second a four-note chromatic motive which revolves around a central pitch in b. 19 (motive D; Bayer's 'chromaticisme retourné' (1990)). Both ideas begin from the same chord (x), a pentatonic sonority which again combines a major second with a perfect fifth, and is to become a characteristic sonority in the work in

its own right; ex. 4.7 shows how it is developed in these two motives and how it relates to the preceding material (x indicates the initial trichord, and x' the closely related tetrachord into which it is sometimes expanded).

Ex. 4.7 Motives C and D

Ainsi la nuit, i.

The musical score for Ex. 4.7, Motives C and D, is presented in two systems. The first system shows a piano introduction with a trichord 'x' in the treble and a tetrachord 'x'' in the bass. Dynamics range from *pp* to *ff*. The second system shows Motive C and Motive D. Motive C is a trichord 'x' and Motive D is a tetrachord 'x''. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *ff*. The score includes various performance instructions such as *pizz.*, *arco*, and *gliss.*

With the beginning of the second part, at fig. 5, the music resumes a more regular and flowing continuity, initially centred on the c'-d'-e' drone with which the first part began. The cello returns to motive B at the same pitch-level as in the first half; but apart from these recapitulatory elements, most of the other melodic and harmonic ideas are new, though still sharing features in common with earlier ideas. The viola presents a new theme (theme E, see ex. 4.8), which functions as a kind of ostinato figure, circling around the pitch d' without ever

sounding it. It is characterised by vertical (intervallic) and horizontal (palindromic) symmetries, and introduces the octatonic collection which soon replaces the c'-d'-e' drone and dominates the harmony from here until the end of the movement. Four pitches from theme E are taken up by the first violin as an independent idea, (motive F, Bayer's 'motif 4 sons'), and one last motive is developed by applying the introverted chromatic contour of motive D to the two major-second steps which feature in themes B and E: the result, motive G, is the source of much of the chromatic cluster-harmony which appears in Dutilleux's music for the first time in this work (see ex. 4.8).

Ex. 4.8 Motives E, F and G

Ainsi la nuit, i, fig. 5 + 2.

Un peu moins lent

Theme E

c.f. motive F

motive F

p

(8)

Motive

mp

Motive G

p

The interlocking of whole-tone steps to produce a fully chromatic collection characterises the harmony of the opening bars of this section (from fig. 5), in which the octatonic intervals of theme E are initially overlayed with the whole-tone clusters of the drone c'-d'-e' and the cello's theme B (two octaves higher: b" - c#''' - d#'''). As the passage develops and intensifies in dynamic the octatonic harmony becomes more prevalent.

The appearance of such an extended passage of undisguised octatonic writing represents a slightly unexpected return to a harmonic technique that Dutilleux seemed to have completely abandoned in the works of the 1960s, and had not used for more than the briefest of figures since the sonatas of the 1940s. The way that the collection is deployed shows how much Dutilleux's style has changed since then, however. Instead of the three distinct layers of melody, accompaniment and bass-line which characterised the earlier works, bass notes (such as the F#s at fig. 7 and the Cs at fig. 9) are reduced to occasional punctuation, melody to isolated fragments, and for the most part all four instruments contribute on equal terms to an exploration of the full registral space and of different spacings and intensities of rhythm and dynamics. The figures descending and ascending in contrary motion at fig. 7 take up a kind of writing introduced in Linéaire

from Métaboles: the present example is more dynamic, and in that sense more complex, however, even though it involves fewer parts. Rather than moving chords in parallel, with each constituent voice making the same number of steps, as in Linéaire, the chords (i.e. the dyads) expand and contract in a systematic way as they rise and fall (see ex. 4.9).

Ex. 4.9 Systematic contraction of dyads

Ainsi la nuit, i, fig. 7,
(reduction).

interval
classes: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Octatonic source collection

These descending figures culminate in the second climax of the movement, at fig. 8 +1, which is followed by a diminuendo and a dispersal across the pitch spectrum: a characteristic gesture which returns at the ends of sections throughout the rest of the work. In the short aftermath, from fig. 9, an octatonic and symmetrical texture woven out of overlapping statements of theme E in different registers gradually gives way to permutations of motive G on the pitches F#, G, G#, A in harmonics, while the rhythmic regularity of theme E's continuous quavers gives way to the unmeasured fragments of the final bar.

This discussion of the first movement will, I hope, have given some impression of the extent to which ideas throughout the whole work relate to each other, and how they tend to be in a dynamic process of change whenever they are heard. Many themes can be related to more than one earlier idea, and different presentations of the theme can highlight one derivation or another. Most of the elements which are to contribute to this web of allusion, transformation and reminiscence derive from material first introduced in this movement.

Parenthèse 1 and Miroir d'Espace

In Parenthèse 1 there is further development of the fragmented, pizzicato theme A', again creating an explosive, inconclusive gesture which is then followed by a brief, lyrical reminiscence of theme D.

Miroir d'Espace is designed around two axes of reflection. The movement as a whole is palindromic, with each of the two main melodic statements (forward and reversed) preceded by violent outbursts (based on theme G; figs 1 -1 and 3) which articulate the bipartite form of the movement while remaining outside the movement's symmetrical schemes. The slow melodic lines in the extreme high and low registers make use of the kind of

mirror inversion first explored in Regard from Tout un monde lointain..., and which may have been influenced by b. 72-82 at the end of the first movement of Bartók's Music for strings.... As in that work, the rhythm of the upper and lower lines is staggered, so as to create a kind of inverted heterophony, with the cello following the violin line at one quaver's distance.

Neither the vertical nor the horizontal axis is observed simply or literally, however. Various different kinds of inversion relationship determine the reflection of violin and cello lines: at first, in b. 2-4 the cello follows the same pitch-classes as the violin but reverses the direction of each leap. In b. 5 it traces a true intervallic inversion of the upper line, taking E as its axis, and in the following two bars the axis changes to G#. In between, the second violin and viola provide a textural foil to the glassy smoothness of the two outer lines with their spluttering and rapidly decaying figures, but generally disregard the pitch symmetries.

In the second part of the movement, from b. 10, these symmetries are then retraced in retrograde. But the movement is brought to an end one phrase before the retrograde is completed. Since the movement began with motive F (ending on C#) and immediately followed it with the same motive in retrograde (beginning on C#), the whole

movement therefore ends as it began with motive F and closes on C#, with the polarity of treble and bass dissolving in the final bar as all three lower instruments join the first violin on high C#s.

Parenthèse 2 and Litanies

Parenthèse 2 begins by continuing the focus of C#, both as a pedal note and in the melody. Like the previous parenthèse it is based on motive D and chord-theme A, presented both in a palindromic variant at fig. B and another explosive pizzicato version at the end. But the different fragments are no longer separated by silences as before; instead they lead one into the other with ever increasing momentum, running straight into Litanies, a movement whose violent and unrelenting energy makes it the climax of the first part of the work. Here the chord-theme A returns, now more forceful and in a faster tempo, and acts as a kind of refrain in a rondo-like structure. The theme is extended to a further highpoint, a chord harmonising the melodic top line a", which was not included in the original statement of theme A at the beginning of the work, but which was prefigured in the earliest pizzicato statement (see ex. 4.5) and again in Parenthèse 1 (fig. A +1) and Parenthèse 2 (fig. B; see ex. 4.10).

Ex. 4.10 Extension of theme A

Ainsi la nuit, iii, figs 2-3

Chords: A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 extension A6 A3' A6 A3' A6

The long opening statement combines the original form of the theme, rising from d', and the new extension which descends from a", returning to an abbreviation of the original form at fig. 4 which only rises to the e#' of chord A4. The refrain only returns once more in its complete form, at fig. 13, and its other appearances are reduced to just one of these two later parts: the rising original form, abbreviated, at fig. 9, and the descending extension at figs 8 and 15.

In the episodes (figs 5-8, 10-12) the major second c'-d' is carried over from chord A1, as in the *Nocturne*, and used as the basis for the superimposition of whole-tone dyads in a vigorous exploration of the different kinds of cluster-harmony which were tentatively introduced at fig. 5 of the *Nocturne*. In the first episode (figs 5-8) this is combined with theme F in its prime and retrograde forms, before introducing a rising scalar

figure (fig. 7 +3) which will become more prominent in Constellations. In the second episode (from fig. 10) the whole-tone dyads are set against a pizzicato exploration¹³ of the harmonies of theme A.

With its homophonic refrain and insistently reiterated opening chord, the movement shows similarities to the formal design of Incantatoire from Métaboles. As in that work, the final statement ends not with the full chord but with a bare unison. But the effect in Litanies is dynamic where the earlier movement was essentially static, because here the main theme ranges energetically between different registers and the emerging areas of pitch focus which are beginning to be associated with them, rather than being bounded by the same pitch class at the upper and lower boundaries as in Incantatoire. While d' forms a clear central focus in the episodes, in the refrain it does not dominate the harmony in the same way, and so its emergence in the final bars is a decisive event, not merely a confirmation of what was already established.

13 In his analysis of this passage, Humbert does not remark on the direct relationship with chord A6, instead viewing this harmony as a remote transformation of chord A2, as he did in the passages shown in exx. 4.5 and 4.10 (Humbert 1985: 155; see also 147 and 151).

Parenthèse 3 and Litanies 2

After the pause, the second part of the work begins with ethereal harmonics and high pizzicati in which motive D is extended downwards, bringing it closer to motive G and producing chromatic clusters as each of its pitches is sustained and overlapped. The same melody continues in Litanies 2, and in both movements the pitch focus hovers ambiguously between the A which each phrase begins by circling around, and the F# onto which each phrase falls at the end.

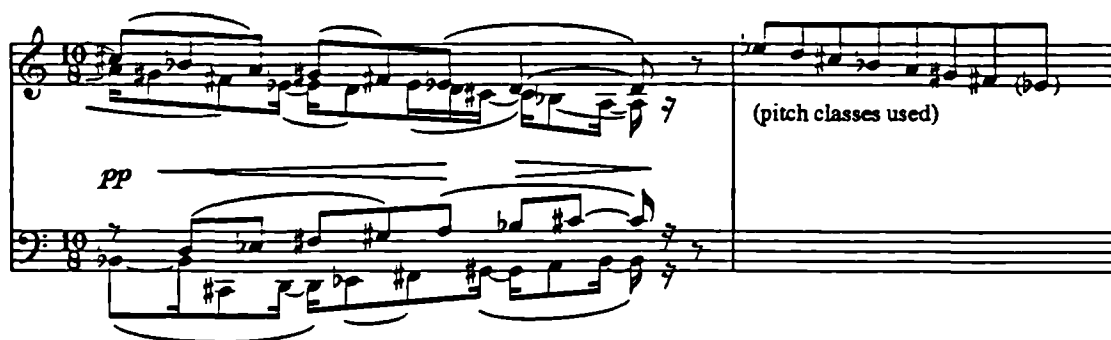
Litanies 2 is a slow, lyrical movement whose rapt cantabile is reminiscent of Regard from Tout un monde lointain.... As in the Nocturne, the sustained harmony is in the centre of the texture, with melodic lines both above and below, and features the sonority of the major second. Again, there is a broadly bipartite scheme, with each half beginning with an extended cantabile, leading later into a passage where the melody gives way to a texture of increasing intensity (figs 4 and 9) followed by a brief closing gesture featuring rising glissandi (figs 5 and 10). In the first of the two parts, the opening cantabile is followed by a more decisive move onto F#, which is sustained as a pedal-note from figs 2-5. At a similar point in the second part there is a passage (from fig. 7) where the intervallic structure formed by the

violins' melodic lines in the previous bar is taken up as a mode, producing three bars of rich modal harmony and equally sudden homophony from the four instruments (ex. 4.11). The seven-note mode includes both A and F#, but its use does not emphasise any one pitch, each voice stepping down the modal scale to produce descending chords in the manner developed by Messiaen and discussed on p. 199 above (see ex. 3.2iv).¹⁴ After this moment of unexpected harmonic clarity (though without focus on any single pitch), the end of the movement returns to the earlier ambiguity between A and F#. Pitch a' with its semitonal neighbours once again dominates the melodic writing from fig. 8, but at fig. 10 the four instruments' overlapping phrases end respectively on f#, a, bb" and e''' (fig. 10), and pitch-class A is not included in the final chord.

Ex. 4.11 Descending modal harmonies

Ainsi la nuit, iv, fig. 7

¹⁴ Dutilleux's mode is not actually taken from Messiaen. Six of the seven pitches in Dutilleux's mode are included in the eight pitches of Messiaen's mode 4 (see Messiaen 1942: chapter XIV). But Dutilleux's mode is not symmetrical, or 'of limited transposition'.



Parenthèse 4 and Constellations

Chord-theme A returns in its most explosive form at the beginning and end of Parenthèse 4, framing an exploration of the overlapping pentatonic chords of theme C, not heard since fig. 4 in the Nocturne.

Constellations is the most volatile and unpredictable movement in the work, and together with the Nocturne it embraces the widest range of motives and textures. The form of the movement arises from the impulsive nature of the material, almost all of which rises in contour and accelerates; this tendency at the level of detail is reflected in the movement's phrase structure, which can be understood as a series of crescendos and accelerating rhythmic patterns. At the end of each of these short sections the rhythmic impetus overflows in a rush of faster notes towards either the higher or lower registral extreme: this pattern can be seen in the phrases beginning

at figs 1, 3, 4, 4 +2, 5, 5 +2, 7, 8, 11. These short sections can be grouped into a ternary design, with a more lyrical middle section from figs 5-7, but there is only a minimal correspondence between the outer sections. More important to the overall shape of the movement is the emergence of an ever stronger emphasis on pitch-class A. At first A is presented in alternation with Eb in the pentatonic harmonies of theme C (e.g. figs 2, 3, 4), but later A becomes increasingly prominent without harmonic support, as a single pitch marking registral boundaries (figs 6, 7, 8, 10) and the movement culminates in a fury of open A-strings at fig. 10 and the powerful octaves of the final bar.

The clearest motivic idea in the movement is theme C, no longer an antiphonal exchange between different players, but rearranged as a simple homophonic sequence and enlivened with repetitions of the first chord in the triplet semiquaver pulse which pervades the movement. Almost entirely confined to upper pitches A and Eb, this theme only appears in between figs 2 and 5, however. Another important figure is simply a rising scale in staccato semiquaver triplets. It is introduced together with theme C at fig. 2 +2, where it uses a similar intervallic structure to the descending modal passage in Litanies 2 (fig. 7) in retrograde (see ex. 4.12a). But it

is given its most extensive treatment later in the movement, between figs 7 and 10, now to a new intervallic pattern beginning on a (and not repeating at the octave; see ex. 4.12b).

Ex. 4.12 Rising modal scales

(i) Ainsi la nuit,
v, fig. 2 + 2

vns: c.f. source collection in ex. 4.11

mp *mp* *mp*

(cello omitted)

pitch classes used (other than violins in first bar)

v, fig. 8

(ii) fig. 8

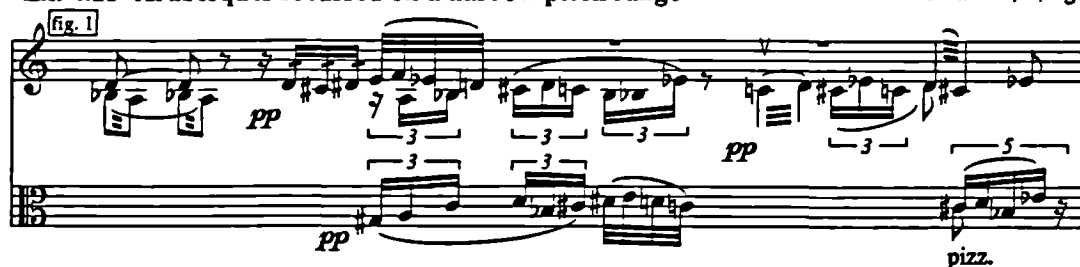
pp *pp* *sfp* *sfp* *sfp* *sfp*

sfp *p* *sfp*

sfp

Apart from these two ideas, much of the writing is convoluted in contour, but can be seen to elaborate certain pitches with a free use of chromatic neighbours, building up elaborate arabesques from elements of motives D and G: ex. 4.13, for example, shows arabesques from the start of the movement which elaborate the pitch d', and fulfil a similar function to the c'-d' drone from Litanies. Later in the movement the arabesques become much more wide-ranging, and the interval of the fourth becomes a characteristic means of bridging the gap between widely separated focal pitches. Ex. 4.14 gives some examples of this, showing how the fourths themselves are sometimes decorated with semitonal movement, and how the writing remains quite free and unsystematic.

Ex. 4.13 Arabesques focussed on a narrow pitch range

Ainsi la nuit, v, fig. 1

Ex. 4.14 Wide-ranging arabesques

Ainsi la nuit, v, fig. 3+2



Nocturne 2 and Temps Suspendu

Constellations is the last movement in Ainsi la nuit to end with a clear gesture of finality. It is perhaps for this reason that from this point on there are no more parenthèses designated in the score: the last two movements both begin and end ambiguously, and at this stage the distinction between parenthetical material and movement proper, which was already rather vague, would become untenable.

Nocturne 2 is a swift and light movement, almost a moto perpetuo, whose textures seem to be on the point of vanishing; it lasts less than a minute. Initially the pitch focus on A is carried over from the preceding movement, but the symmetrical figures at fig. 12 centre around a"/b♭" rather than a" itself, and b♭' is introduced together with the sustained a' pedal at fig. 13 +3, leading to developments of this alternating figure in which the centric focus is lost altogether (from fig. 15). The movement ends with the opposite of the pitch

convergence heard in Constellations: in a kind of centrifugal gesture, the second violin disappears into the very highest register while the viola and cello run to the bottom of their ranges; between the two extremes there is a void.

As in the previous movement, not all the main thematic ideas at the opening of Nocturne 2 are kept in play for long. The symmetrical figures at fig. 12 play on the two whole-tone intervals of motive G, as shown in ex. 4.15. But after fig. 13 +3 they do not reappear, and the rest of the movement is developed from the demisemiquaver theme introduced at fig. 13 -2 (which derives, perhaps, from the viola's first arabesque in ex. 4.13, as Humbert suggests (1985: 161)) and a complementary idea introduced by the cello at fig. 15. This is developed into a chain of descending thirds as the music rises to a climax, weaving in a brief reminiscence of the triplet semiquaver scale figure from Constellations (fig. 18). The aftermath of this climax is brief and inconclusive, the descending figures in viola and cello creating a free symmetry with the more systematic ascent of the second violin (in alternating perfect fourths and tritones, fig. 20).

Ex. 4.15 'Nocturne 2': derivation of opening idea from motive G

Ainsi la nuit, v-vi, fig. 12

fig. 12 *Légèrement détendu*

The musical score is for a string quartet, with parts for violin I (vn), violin II (vn), viola (vla), and cello. It begins with a piano (p) dynamic and the tempo marking 'Légèrement détendu'. The score is divided into two systems, each with four staves. The first system shows the initial derivation of the opening idea from motive G. The second system continues the derivation, with a reference to 'motive G' and 'etc.'.

After the opening chord A1, the final movement falls into a simple two-part scheme. In the first part, the overlapping chords of Parenthèse 4 are interwoven with reminiscences of the arabesques from Constellations, and in the second, beginning at fig. 25, the harmonic material of the first half of the Nocturne is elaborated with increasingly volatile figurations, while the texture becomes more and more insubstantial. In the final section every phrase, whether a crescendo or diminuendo, leads into silence, and the silences are successively longer.

The ending, however, is a surprise, unique in Dutilleux's oeuvre and unexpected even in the context of this work. The pattern of increasing silence is suddenly broken, and the elaborate textures are replaced by simple homophony to end the work with a powerful and mysterious gesture, ambiguously indicating both a new direction and at the same time a reminiscence of the opening. The final chord is clearly similar to the opening one in its layout and tessitura. But its harmony is substantially varied:

both the major second at the top of the chord and the bass note have been transposed, and the intervals between the other pitches are different too. Although chord A1 has frequently reappeared with minor additions or alterations, so subtle as to be easily missed, it has always been at the same pitch level, clearly recognisable because of the open-string d' at the top, and has always retained other strongly characteristic intervals such as the perfect fifth in the bass. Perhaps it was in loosening and even abandoning his habitual liking for harmonic focus as a means of closure that Dutilleux found in Ainsi la nuit the way 'to go a step further'.

Timbres, Espace, Mouvement

Dutilleux's next orchestral work after Tout un monde lointain... was again commissioned by Mstislav Rostropovich, to celebrate his inaugural year as conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington. Work on the piece began in 1976 and the premiere was given in two stages, the first movement in January 1978 and then the complete work in November of the same year. Many critics have admired it, but it is also reckoned to be one of Dutilleux's more 'difficult' works (see, for example, Nichols 1991-2). Despite its apparently abstract title, Timbres, Espace, Mouvement is one of the few works in

which Dutilleux explicitly acknowledges a non-musical inspiration. The subtitle La nuit étoilée refers to the painting by Van Gogh of 1888 which depicts a night sky blazing with huge, comet-like stars.

The piece is scored for an orchestra without violins or violas. As the composer has pointed out, the resulting ensemble lends itself to creating an opposition between the low sound-mass of the cellos and basses and 'the luminous sonorities of wind and brass, while in the centre there is nothing'.¹⁵ Despite his usual insistence that this is not programme music ('Of course, there is absolutely no question of a literal illustration of the canvas, but rather, a spiritual relation to it'),¹⁶ Dutilleux offers a surprisingly detailed account of the correspondences between the music and the picture. The registral space described above is compared to the design of the picture: between the stars and the ground with its church steeple and cypress tree 'the celestial vault, a

15 '[les] sonorités lumineuses des bois et des cuivres alors qu'au centre il n'y a rien' (Dutilleux 1993: 139).

16 'Bien entendu, il ne s'agit nullement d'une illustration littérale de la toile mais d'une relation d'esprit avec cette dernière' (Surchamp 1983: 17).

vertiginous impression of space, of void, even'.¹⁷ The title also emphasises 'timbres, by analogy with the colours of Van Gogh and mouvement, because it's a canvas which gives the impression of movement'¹⁸ (the analogy between timbre and colour is taken further - to the point of linking particular colours and kinds of sound - by Miriam Soumagnac (see Humbert 1985: 168-9) and is also discussed by Caroline Potter (1997: 124-5)).

While there is much in the score which is vividly suggestive of ideas relating to Van Gogh's painting, it is also interesting that the musical techniques employed to create these nocturnal and cosmic images have a great deal in common with the idiom developed in Dutilleux's previous work, Ainsi la nuit. Not only was this work written before Dutilleux had begun thinking about the Van Gogh, but its nocturnal titles were only added during the process of composition, because he felt that the music itself seemed to justify them. This lends support to Dutilleux's repeated claim that his ideas are always

17 'Entre eux la voûte céleste, une vertigineuse impression d'espace, de vide même...' (Dutilleux 1993: 139).

18 '... timbres par analogie aux couleurs de Van Gogh et mouvement parce que c'est une toile qui donne l'apparence de mouvement' (Dutilleux 1993: 139-40). See also Dutilleux 1994: 3.

essentially and originally musical, and never an imitation of some extra-musical design.

The piece is in two movements, each ending on a stark and impressive unison played by the full orchestra. Although its two-movement form is unique among Dutilleux's larger works, the two sections and their unison endings can be discerned in the seven movements of Ainsi la nuit, as discussed above. However, his dislike for gaps between movements, with the distraction and loss of 'enchantment'¹⁹ which he feels they can entail, evidently caused Dutilleux to feel uneasy about the form of Timbres, and in 1990 he wrote an interlude to join together the two main movements, to which he then gave the titles Nébuleuse and Constellations.

The work was particularly admired by Messiaen (see Surchamp 1983: plate 16, and Dutilleux 1993: 141), and it is interesting to consider how it exemplifies the relation between the two composers. Although Dutilleux has

19 'A partir de Métaboles, ... je me suis le plus souvent écarté de cette autre convention du découpage d'une oeuvre en mouvements séparés par une pause, ce qui, dans certains cas, me semble nuire au pouvoir d'"enchantement"' (from Dutilleux's preface to the score of l'Arbre des songes).

20

expressed his admiration for Messiaen, his desire to write 'symphonic' music and the continuity of development which that entailed (as described in his essay 'Qui reste fidèle à la musique symphonique?', see p. 105-6 above) meant that Messiaen's typically sectional, discontinuous approach to constructing a large form remains wholly foreign to him. This has not stopped Dutilleux from appropriating certain harmonic and textural ideas, however. It has already been noted that, from Métaboles on, Dutilleux begins to use chords which move stepwise through the pitches of a mode. Since the use of such restricted pitch collections was already a part of Dutilleux's thinking in the 1940s, before he had had much exposure to Messiaen's music, what was important for Dutilleux was not the general technical principle of 'modes of limited transposition' as set out in Messiaen's theoretical writing, so much as the specific textures he created using it. And it is true that the other rare moments when Dutilleux seems to have appropriated some aspect of the older composer's work suggest the inspiration of a particular sonority, which Dutilleux

20 In particular, he admires Messiaen's sense of harmony and his 'expression incantatoire': see, for example, Dutilleux 1993: 61, 75-6, 181, 213. Caroline Potter gives a good summary of what the two composers have in common (Potter 1997: 182-8).

integrates into the entirely different context of his own piece.

An interesting example of this is provided by two passages, one from Timbres and the other from the passacaille from the first symphony, which feature heavy, forceful trombone thirds falling by an augmented octave. The earlier passage was written in 1949-50, at the time of the French première of Messiaen's Turangalîla symphony in July 1950, and may have been suggested by the very striking and frequently restated 'statue theme' in that work.²¹ If so, the result is thoroughly transformed (and made less boldly modern) by its relatively foursquare metric and harmonic context in the passacaille, but in Timbres (by which time Dutilleux undoubtedly knew Turangalîla), in the absence of such a regular metric background, the resemblance to the Messiaen emerges all the more clearly. Both the Dutilleux passages illustrate the very different compositional thinking underlying his use of the idea by comparison with Messiaen's, for they both lead on towards an emphatic octave bass-note at the

21 This was the first European performance of the complete work, at the Aix-en-Provence International Festival. It was also given in Paris (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées): though reduced to just movements 3, 4 and 5, these performances would still have included the 'statue theme', so-called by Messiaen in his programme-note for the first recording of the work, quoted in Sherlaw Johnson 1975: 83.

end of the phrase, whereas Messiaen's theme is not 'phrased' in this way but simply stops abruptly (ex. 4.16).

Ex. 4.16

First symphony, i, fig. 10 + 2

(i) trombones, horns

Two staves of music in 3/4 time. The top staff is for trombones and horns. The bottom staff is for a lower instrument, possibly bassoon or tuba. The music consists of a series of chords and single notes. Dynamics include *ff*, *fff*, and *ff*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

(ii) trombones, horns, bassoons, etc. *Timbres, Espace, Mouvement*, i, fig. 16

Two staves of music in 16/8 time. The top staff is for trombones, horns, and bassoons. The bottom staff is for a lower instrument. The music features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many notes. Dynamics include *ff*, *fff*, and *pp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

(iii) trombones, horns, bassoons, etc. Messiaen: *Turangalila symphony*, i, fig. 3

Two staves of music in 4/4 time. The top staff is for trombones, horns, and bassoons. The bottom staff is for a lower instrument. The music consists of a series of chords and single notes. Dynamics include *fff*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

As in *Métaboles*, there are also some passages whose texture recalls Lutosławski, where a harmony comprising many different pitches spread across a wide registral spectrum and scored for the full orchestra is kept in play through a mass of lively repeated figurations. However, it is noteworthy just how few and how slight are the traces of influence which remain in *Timbres*, whether of

twentieth-century composers formative to Dutilleux in earlier years, such as Bartók and Stravinsky, or of composers of his own time such as Messiaen and Lutosławski. The way that he integrates a variety of harmonic types with motivic development and centres of pitch focus is, by now, very much his own.

Form and Pitch focus

Both movements of Timbres, espace, mouvement fall into four unconventional but clearly articulated sections (see ²² Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below).

In the first and third sections of the first movement, registral space is gradually filled by a mass of sound, which accumulates by sustaining each new pitch of a wandering melodic line. Towards the end of each section sound-masses of this kind saturate the registral space with overlapping wave movements of increasing intensity.

22 The final section of the first movement is, as Humbert says, rather shorter than the first three, and he describes it as 'une manière de coda' (Humbert 1985: 170-6), although the coup de théâtre with which it is revealed can also be seen as the culmination of the movement.

Mari's brief description also adopts the first three sections. But she makes no reference at all to the music at figs 31-35, or the dramatic appearance of the cello chords at fig. 30, which arguably form the main climax of the movement (Mari 1988: 165).

Table 4.1 Formal plan of *Nébuleuse* (*Timbres, Espace, Mouvement*, first movement).

Section	Fig.	Pitch focus	'spatial'/'singing'
I.i	(beginning)	G#	'spatial'
I.ii	6	G#	
II	10	G#	'singing': ornamental, monodic
III.i	17	-	'spatial'
III.ii	22	g# / D	
IV	30	- fig 32: G# (Ab) fig 34: - fig 35 +4: D	'singing': 'chorale', homophonic (fig 34: 'spatial')

The second section, and the beginning of the fourth, respond to these events with a singing, and thus emphatically human, melodic line. In the second section this is a highly ornamental and largely monodic line, with the faintly oriental character of Dutilleux's other 'incantatory' melodies (e.g. *Incantatoire* from *Métaboles*, and fig. 50 in *Houles* from *Tout un monde*). The 'singing' in the fourth section (figs 30-2) uses the other vocal *topos* familiar in Dutilleux's instrumental writing: the chorale, with solemn, rhythmically steady, stepwise

melody, accompanied by a homophony of block chords (this is another instance of the 'bell-theme').

Table 4.2 Formal plan of Constellations (*Timbres, Espace, Mouvement*, second movement).

Section	Fig.	Pitch focus	'spatial'/'singing'
I	(begin-ning)	C#, g#'	'singing': richly harmonised
II	7	C#, f#'''	'spatial'
III	17	-	'singing': monody (solo cadenzas)
IV	25	- fig. 30: A#	'spatial'

In the second movement the alternation of what might be called 'sound-space' composition and cantabile responses is reversed. The movement opens with warmly lyrical writing for the cellos, and the third section presents a series of incantatory cadenzas followed by the climactic return of the chorale theme, while the second and fourth sections return to mapping out points and areas in the sound-space, the second with pointillist repeated-note figures and the fourth with a rapid legato arabesque

which quickly multiplies to produce the sonorous 'constellations' of the movement's title (as Dutilleux has suggested in his programme-note, cited in Potter 1997: 130).

Where the two movements show overt parallels, the tendency is for the second movement to fulfil or exceed what was suggested in the first: the second movement's more extensive development of the chorale theme introduced in the fourth section of the first movement is a good example. In a similar way, the ending of the second movement parallels but also intensifies the effect of the first, replacing a straight crescendo on the final unison with the dynamic and timbral variations which cause the sound to move both figuratively, across different registers, and literally across the space occupied by the orchestra.

Although, as Mari points out, the opening of each section in the first movement can be easily identified by a change of tempo (Mari 1988: 164), an equally important factor is the decisive gestures of pitch focus with which each section ends; pitch focus also plays a noticeable and significant role in the second movement.

In the first movement there is a repeated and unvarying emphasis on G#, both in the melodic lines and

as a pedal note. The first section (as discussed below) ends emphatically on a G#, with the first of three very striking unison notes which dominate the form of the work as a whole (fig. 9). Towards the end there is a change of direction, however: from figs 24-8 the pitch D, not previously highlighted, begins to play a prominent role in the bass-line, and in the final bars when the woodwind lines suddenly converge onto another strong unison to end the movement it is not G# but D.

Though the second movement is more varied in its pitch focus, it ends with a similar gesture, only preparing the final octave A#s shortly before the end. Unison or octave sonorities in stark fortissimo are also used to end Litanies and Constellations in Ainsi la nuit, as noted above, but these earlier movements end by consolidating a pitch focus which has been implicit throughout the preceding music. What is new in the endings to the two movements of Timbres is the relation of the final unison to the preceding movement. There is an element of surprise and of disproportionate unanimity as the whole orchestra converges onto a pitch which, while it may be a comprehensible outcome of certain features of the immediately preceding music (the bass D from fig. 24 in the first movement, the rising trumpet lines at figs 29-30 in the second), is nonetheless strikingly whimsical with

respect to the movement as a whole. The two final unisons are a crucial part of the dramatic design of the whole work, and represent a more daring compositional experiment than the unison endings in Ainsi la nuit which they seem to resemble.

The effect of these two stark unisons on the form and effect of the whole work changes dramatically with the addition in 1990 of a new Interlude. The interlude is quite extensive, with a duration of about four minutes or roughly half the duration of one of the existing movements, and is scored for the twelve cellos, joined near the end by the celesta. The movement creates a gradual transition from the forceful and agitated low Ds with which it begins (taking up the final note of the preceding movement) to the ethereal calm of the work's opening theme (and accumulating harmony) descending from a high g#, becoming increasingly lyrical as it moves seamlessly into the second movement. Although Dutilleux finds the work 'far better balanced with the new interlude' (Potter 1997: 131), I must confess that, for me, the power of the original two-part form derived precisely from the gulf between the two movements. The giant non-sequitur at the heart of the work is an arresting and disturbing gesture in its own right, and also gives redoubled power to the end of the whole work,

implying that it closes on the brink of another even larger and more inexplicable void. The interlude smoothes over this bold discontinuity, connecting and effectively normalising it to give the work an overall shape which is far less striking.²³

First movement (Nebulaire)

The movement's division into four sections, and the alternately pictorial and emotional emphasis of these sections has already been discussed. Each section builds towards a moment of climax: the 'resolution' onto the octave G#s at fig. 9, the violent but inconclusive outburst at fig. 16, the frustrated climax at figs 29-30 and finally the unexpected convergence onto D₄ discussed above. After the 'resolution' of the first section at fig. 9 (to be discussed in greater detail below), the second section opens in the style of a cadenza and introduces an unusual instrument which Dutilleux would use again in L'arbre des songes, the oboe d'amore (fig. 10). The rhythmic freedom of the quasi-improvisatory melodic

23 I also regret the reprise of the opening theme towards the end of the interlude, partly because such an overt and literal repeat jars with the general tendency for material to be transformed in the course of the work, but more especially because the off-beat celesta notes add a rhythmically foursquare and slightly banal quality to this originally free-flowing and evocative line.

line obscures the sense of any underlying pulse, in clear contrast to the regular crotchet tactus which governed the whole of the first section, and this gives the music a very different, more volatile character. The theme announced by the oboe d'amore (B) becomes something of an idée fixe, and is closely derived from the six-note motive which begins the opening twelve-note theme at the beginning of the whole work (see ex. 4.17ii). The continuation is different, however, and introduces superimposed thirds, a harmonic resource whose absence from the first section contributed to its austerity; in the second they provide the material for increasingly brilliant arpeggiations. Fourth chords are to become even more important, dominating the sustained harmonies throughout the piece as well as providing melodic material for further arpeggio-style figures: they are introduced in the bassoons, bass clarinet and trombones at figs 11-12.

Ex. 4.17 Related Themes

(i) Theme A

The musical notation for Theme A consists of two systems. The first system is in 3/4 time, marked *pp*. It features a six-note melodic line in the upper voice, with a trill-like figure (fig. 1) and a whole-tone chord. The second system shows a retrograde of the opening figure in the upper voice.

(ii) Theme B



The melodic line introduced at the beginning of the third section (fig. 17) takes the chromatic twists of theme A as its starting point, but develops them so as to unravel a chromatic cluster around the initial semitone a#'-b' in a 'wedge' pattern of widening intervals. As at the opening, the pitches of the melodic line are sustained to create a gradual accumulation of harmony, although both the narrow contour (producing chromatic clusters) and the hesitant, uneven rhythm give the passage a closer resemblance to Parenthèse 2 from Ainsi la nuit.

The fourth section begins at fig. 30 with another exploration of the 'resonance' effect which Dutilleux first mentioned with reference to Métaboles (Humbert 1983: 94). The melody here prefigures the chorale theme at the end of the second movement, where it has the two whole-tone steps of the 'bell-theme' discussed above; here it includes a semitone. The impassioned quality of this passage gives way to gentle rocking figures (fig. 32) centred on a diatonic pitch-collection. But their

relative harmonic stability is soon disturbed as a pattern of three fourth-chords begins to cycle through the twelve pitch-classes (fig. 34), while woodwind arabesques decorate them with patterns of thirds (as in section II), building up to a climax followed by a final, precipitous descent.

Dutilleux has described how the inspiration of Van Gogh's picture led him to use his orchestra to produce a mass of sounds in the upper register widely separated from a deep and remote bass layer (see p. 304 above): this idea is not purely textural but has a harmonic aspect as well. Although G# is certainly the main pitch focus throughout much of the movement, in the opening section it is mostly featured in the upper register, while the bass-line tends to revolve around G₄ and C₄, creating a powerful sense of dichotomy between the bass and the upper layers of texture (though less pervasive than G#, C# also features prominently in the upper register). This alignment of pitch emphasis is particularly clear in section I.ii, which is a long crescendo designed as a series of waves moving down from the treble and up from the bass and culminating on G# at fig. 9, where, for the first time, this pitch is established across the whole pitch range.

The convergence of different registral layers on a pitch focus of G# continues throughout section II, and

when the oboe d'amore melody from fig. 10 is repeated by the full woodwind section at figs 15ff, its G# cadences in the upper register are confirmed emphatically in the bass. But the climax at the end of section III takes the bass back down to C₄, divorcing the bass from the upper registers. In section III the harmony evolves gradually from a narrow band in the centre of the sound-space, and when the texture first divides into separate layers it is the upper register this time which is set against the main textural mass, again with emphasis on the pitches C₄ and G₄ (piccolo, figs 18-21; flutes, fig. 23). G# emphasis begins to reappear in the centre of the texture from fig. 22, and at fig. 24 the texture reverts to the earlier alignment (as in section I) with the whole upper and central textural mass organised around G# and the bass separated by a registral gap and now focussed on D' (though G₄ is also prominent in the bass, as before).

At the beginning of the fourth section the way the 'chorale' is situated in the pitch spectrum encapsulates the registral and harmonic tensions which have run throughout the movement: it is bounded by pitches g₄" and c₄, with g#' picked out by the harp in the centre of the texture (figs 30-32). At fig. 32, G# is given its most lush harmonisation (as Ab), in an extended reminiscence of the diatonic (Db major) pitch-collection heard briefly at

fig. 5 +1 (shown in ex. 4.19 on p. 324 below); D₄ only appears in a very subsidiary role as neighbour note, and is not included in the six-note modal collection which determines the harmony of the final woodwind descent. Thus, the ending of the movement on D₄ picks up on the role played by that pitch earlier, but not immediately beforehand, as part of a complex of (usually bass) pitches set against the prevailing G# focus; nonetheless, it is highly unusual in suddenly throwing one of these peripheral pitch focuses into such an unequivocally dominating and central position.

A more detailed examination of the first of the four sections will illustrate the way that Dutilleux uses a variety of different types of harmonic content to create the sound-masses described above and to integrate pitch focuses with them.

Section I

The movement opens with its principal melodic idea descending from the initial g#'''. It is one of Dutilleux's indefinitely extendable melodic lines (as discussed in chapters 2 and 3 above), which proceeds in even rhythmic values and combines recognisable motivic outlines with a flexibility of direction. Like similar lines in Métaboles, Tout un monde and Mystère de

l'instant, it makes use of all twelve pitch-classes (here as the first twelve notes: the continuation of the line simply develops the contour of the first six notes at different transpositions: see ex. 4.17 above).

Each note in this line is sustained, so that as the melody progresses it leaves an increasingly wide and dense harmonic 'trail'. The initial harmony is one of the most densely chromatic in the work, and Dutilleux begins to split the sound into different layers and to contrast different degrees of harmonic and chromatic density when he moves the upper nine pitches onto a whole-tone harmony in b. 7, while the melody continues to build up new areas of chromatic harmony below. In the second phrase, the melody determines the density of the sustained harmony in the opposite way, with sustained pitches falling silent one by one as the melodic line passes through them (fig. 2; see also fig. 2 +3). Having thus cleared registral space Dutilleux begins to construct a different harmonic field, now arranged as a low bass-line and sustained chords underneath the melodic line. This no longer leaves a harmonic 'trail', though the latter part of the phrase again silences the notes of the sustained chords as it passes through them. The melody and the sustained chords both produce twelve-note aggregates, though they are independent of each other and are only built up gradually

(ex. 4.18).

Ex. 4.18 Melodic and harmonic twelve-note aggregates*Timbres, Espace, Mouvement, i, figs 3-4*

The musical score for Ex. 4.18 is presented in two systems. The first system consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, showing a melodic line that begins on a high G# and descends through various intervals. It is marked with a box containing 'fig. 3' and a dynamic of 'p'. The middle staff contains a complex harmonic texture with many notes, some of which are beamed together. It is marked with 'pp' and includes the annotation 'All 12 pitch-classes'. The bottom staff is in bass clef, showing a low register melody. The second system continues the melodic line in the top staff and the harmonic texture in the middle and bottom staves. The bottom staff has a 'pp' marking. Annotations include '11-note aggregate (completed by b2)' pointing to a specific interval in the middle staff.

The melody descends into the bass register, coming to rest on a low G# at fig. 4 +1 and bringing to an end this opening passage in which the melodic line has been the principal generating idea. Twelve-note harmony is now replaced by more limited pitch collections, moving from the harsh and disparate harmony of fig. 4 +1, an extreme instance of polarized spacing, through more smoothly spaced, relatively consonant chords with treble and bass gathered together in the central register. The 'Db major' diatonic collection which occurs fleetingly

here provides the most euphonious harmonisation of the focal $g\#'$ (ab') in the whole movement: as noted above, it returns in a more extended passage shortly before the end at fig. 32 (see ex. 4.19).²⁴ The chords then contract onto a soft unison $g\#'$ which foreshadows the more striking fortissimo $G\#s$ which are the goal of the following section.

Ex. 4.19 $D\flat$ diatonic harmonies

(i) **fig. 5** (rhythms and dynamics omitted)

(ii) **fig. 32** *Timbres, Espace, Mouvement, i.*

pp horns, tpts

cellos

pp < >

In section I.ii the whole-tone harmonies briefly introduced in b. 7 become the principal means of ensuring harmonic coherence. The passage as a whole (figs 6 to 9, shown in ex. 4.20) acts as a large-scale preparation for the decisive convergence at fig. 9 onto $G\#$, approaching this goal in a series of wave-like motions. The

24 This kind of harmony is first used by Dutilleux in *Linéaire*, the second movement of *Métaboles*, and as with some other distinctive kinds of harmony, he seems to have identified them with particular pitch-levels, even in different works: the chord in that movement is identical to the chord in the present work (see ex. 3.7 on p. 219 above).

opposition of upper and lower layers of the texture and their different harmonic characterisation have already been discussed. At a more detailed level, this opposition is determined (from fig. 7 on) by the use of complementary whole-tone collections in the treble and bass layers.

Ex. 4.20 Section I.i: movement towards G# as focal pitch

The musical score for Ex. 4.20, Section I.i, is written in 3/4 time and consists of four systems of staves. The first system includes 'fig. 6' and dynamic markings 'p', 'mf', and 'pp'. The second system includes 'loco' and 'Phrase 1'. The third system includes 'fig. 7' and 'Phrase 2'. The fourth system includes 'fig. 8' and 'Phrase 3'. The score features complex textures with multiple layers of notes, including triplets and slurs, and various dynamic markings like 'p', 'mf', 'pp', and 'mp'.

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff features a melodic line with trills and triplets, marked with 'f cresc.' and 'p cresc.'. The middle staff has a complex chordal texture with triplets and is marked 'mf cresc.'. The bottom staff provides a bass line with triplets and is marked 'p cresc.'. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *f*, *cresc.*, *mf*, and *p*. A section is labeled 'Phrase 4'. The bottom staff also includes a 'loco' marking and a 'fig. 9' box. The score is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature.

In the first four bars (from fig. 6) the bass-line establishes an emphasis on G₄, and two other pitches drawn from the same whole-tone collection, B and D#. The upper line continues to stress g# and group around it harmonies including clusters from this whole-tone collection, which is complementary to that of the bass-line. At fig. 7 the bass-line begins to move, developing from an inversion of the opening twelve-note melody. Above it a complex chordal texture begins a series of convoluted descents. The four voices which make up these chords combine at each step of their descent to form sonorities drawn alternately from the two whole-tone collections. But simple homophony is generally avoided:

the rhythm of these whole-tone chords is variable and syncopated, and it is obscured by further rhythmic dislocations in which one of the voices is suspended across a change of harmony in the other three. Despite their generally similar motion, the four voices are given a degree of contrapuntal independence so that the contours of their lines reflect, separately, the shape of the opening motive itself, and this gives rise to notes which are dissonant in respect of the prevailing whole-tone collection, and then 'resolve' back into it.

From fig. 7 to the culmination of this section at fig. 9 the music proceeds in four large phrases, each combining a bass ascent with a chordal descent in the upper register in four or more voices; in each phrase there is increasingly complex interaction between the different layers. The first bass ascent rises to the focal point of the upper layer, g[#], but at the same moment the whole-tone chords move onto the complementary whole-tone collection, so that bass-line and treble continue their dissonant relationship. Immediately the low G₄ is resumed, and the second phrase begins rising from the other pitch focus of the bass register, c₄. A broadly similar harmonic sequence underlies the second descent, transposed up by a perfect fourth, but there are variations in the way it is realised, such as the abⁿ in

the top voice which is suspended through three changes of harmony and not 'resolved' until b. 36. In addition, a new voice is added during these bars, beginning in the tenor register and conforming to the whole-tone sets of the upper layer, until it merges with the ascending bass-line. This time the bass ends on the upper focal note c#", but again the chord in the upper layer is dissonant to it.

In the third phrase a new layer is superimposed in the higher register; this descends according to a regular intervallic pattern (alternating descending tones and rising semitones) in parallel major thirds. Its beginning is altered, however, so that both g#" and c#" appear, individually articulated, before the lower of the two voices aligns itself with the other and they begin their parallel descent. In the middle layer one voice, which is itself thickened by a series of whole-tone chords which harmonise it, follows the same regular alternating pattern as the upper layer, with which it is alternately consonant and dissonant (in the sense of belonging to the same, or complementary, whole-tone collections).

C₄ is the starting point for the third bass ascent, which, having started from a higher point, reaches the middle register within one bar, whereupon another two-

voiced bass ascent begins. This creates a greatly intensified ending for the third phrase, which overlaps with the beginning of the fourth. Descending again from g#"', the top layer now proceeds in dissonant (i.e. non-whole-tone) chords until the harmony is thickened by the entry of the two lower layers. These no longer retain distinct roles: now they both rise, and it is in the middle register that a single line rises from c4, while the chords drawn from alternate whole-tone sets are in the bass. These chords rise into the treble register, and immediately before the resolution onto octave G#s is reached, g4", for the first time emphasised in the higher register, is sustained at the top of the texture while the bass rises for the last time from c4. The climactic G# at fig. 9 thus provides the resolution to what is, perhaps, the clearest instance of goal-directed writing in any of Dutilleux's works since the first symphony.²⁵

Conclusion

The two works examined in this chapter are both perceived by their composer as musical explorations of the night. They also share many characteristics of musical language,

²⁵ To intensify this climactic sonority Dutilleux adds trills and a strongly Bartókian arpeggiated cluster in the celesta, very similar to that noted above at the end of Regard in Tout un monde lointain...

including several features not found in Dutilleux's previous music, such as the widespread use of different kinds of cluster harmony, dramatic octave gestures at the end of movements, and an overall bipartite plan. They are perhaps Dutilleux's two most 'difficult' scores, sometimes harsh in harmony and sonority, and potentially bewildering in the suddenness of certain crucial events and the subtlety of others, so that their formal shapes can be difficult to grasp, especially without a score. But these difficulties are certainly strengths on repeated hearing, imparting a sense of the risk taken by the composer in extending his language to embrace these 'difficulties'. The uncompromising endings of both works sum up the aesthetic which underlies them: the need to avoid any suggestion of resolution in the closing bars led Dutilleux to abandon the harmonic consistency of Métaboles and earlier compositions and instead try to embrace the inconsistent and the irrational, qualities which, for Dutilleux, make night such a compelling theme.

Chapter 5

Late works:the orchestral music of the 1980s.Introduction

As in previous decades, Dutilleux's output in the 1980s is dominated by two major works. The second of these, Mystère de l'instant (1989) is scored for a chamber orchestra of strings, percussion and cymbalom, continuing an interest in redesigning the composition and layout of the standard orchestra that Dutilleux had already shown in the second symphony and in Timbres. Since this is an interest which he intends to pursue further in works currently in progress (Dutilleux 1993: 166), the violin concerto L'arbre des songes of 1985^{might} well^{have} proved to be his last work for the full orchestral complement. The difference in scoring can be seen as emblematic of the relationship between these two works in more general terms: both continue to use ideas and techniques already familiar from his previous music, but in their choice of which aspects of Dutilleux's style to explore they are very different, almost complementary. L'arbre des songes is arguably Dutilleux's most unified and interconnected score as regards its motivic derivations, whereas in Mystère de l'instant there is very little carrying over of

any motivic idea from one movement to another, and indeed many of the ten movements eschew motivic writing altogether to concentrate on the characterisation and development of different textures.

Despite the contrasting character of these two works, they both share many features of their musical language and the compositional techniques by which they are constructed. After a brief biographical sketch, I shall discuss elements of this musical language, before looking at each work in turn. As in chapter 4, a consideration of the overall form is followed by an examination of part of each piece in greater detail. In the first movement of L'arbre the solo violin's improvisatory opening lines are the source of most of the proliferating melodies which follow, both lyrical and brilliant. This movement also exemplifies the varied and complex use of focal pitches throughout the concerto, often with different pitch emphases running concurrently in different registers. In Mystère, too, different registers are often individually characterised, although the use of motivic writing and pitch focus is less extensive and less complex than in the L'arbre: these characteristics, together with the inventive textures typical of the work, are exemplified by the first movement, Appels.

Biographical background

Work on L'arbre began soon after the first complete performance of Timbres. Espace. Mouvement in January 1979, following a commission from Radio France for a concerto for the renowned violinist Isaac Stern. Dutilleux made slow progress, and the première was twice postponed before finally taking place in November 1985 (Humbert 1985: 191). In 1982 he also added two further movements to the solo cello piece of 1976 to create the 3 Strophes sur le nom de Paul Sacher. Throughout these years Dutilleux had been increasingly in demand in festivals throughout Europe and the United States, and for his appearance as guest composer at the Aldeburgh Festival in August 1985 he composed a short piece for oboe, harpsichord and percussion (For Aldeburgh '85, see Dutilleux 1993: 169). Following the completion of both these works he accepted a commission for a competition piece for the William Kappell Piano competition. Le jeu des contraires (1989) is Dutilleux's first work for solo piano since the two short preludes of 1973, to which it has now been added to make a set of three, and it is his first relatively large-scale piano piece since the sonata of 1948. Developed from a ten-bar sketch which he contributed to the centenary celebrations of the periodical Le monde de la musique in 1987, it shows the most extensive and rigorous use of

inversion symmetries in any of Dutilleux's works (1993: 165). At the same time, a commission from Paul Sacher led to Mystère de l'instant which was first performed in 1989. Although Dutilleux has numerous large-scale commissions waiting to be written, including a concerto for the violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, and works for the Berlin Philharmonic as well as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, only the last of these has been completed.¹ He did write a second movement for the Aldeburgh trio, now joined by double bass, to create Les citations which was first performed in the year of his 75th birthday celebrations, 1991.

Although his health is becoming frailer, he has not been prevented from teaching at Tanglewood in the year of his eightieth birthday, or from overseeing and even performing in a recording of his collected chamber works.

The musical language of Dutilleux's late works

It is characteristic of the works written during these years that, while they draw on certain familiar procedures, in each case one particular technique is

¹ The Shadows of Time, first performed in Boston on 10 October 1997.

pursued with special concentration. In L'arbre des songes, for example, there are numerous ideas already explored in earlier works: joining together the four main movements with three interludes, and the reflection (and distortion) of the solo violin's line by the oboe d'amore creating a kind of shadow or double, particularly in the third movement (as in Le double, and in Regard and Miroirs from Tout un monde; the prominent and soloistic use of the oboe d'amore, meanwhile, dates from Timbres). Symmetry of a more literal kind is a major preoccupation of Dutilleux's recent works, and in L'arbre the principle of reflecting lines around a central axis is extended to sequences of chords. Sometimes these divide into two layers which are exact inversions of each other, as at fig. 2 in the first movement, and sometimes different intervallic structures in the two layers are exchanged, as at fig. 13. Elsewhere the harmonic vocabulary consists largely of clusters, often diatonic, and fourth-chords, or combinations of these elements; there is also one extended passage of octatonic writing (from fig. 22).

However, the dominant idea underlying L'arbre des songes is an organic metaphor, as its title implies, in which the thematic and melodic writing proliferates from the opening idea. Whereas in those earlier works which particularly explored motivic transformation and

interrelation, from the second symphony on, there were always several distinct motivic ideas which were then developed, here more than in any other of Dutilleux's work it can be said that ideas throughout the work can be traced back to a common source, in the opening improvisatory lines played by the solo violin. The ideas which derive from this opening affect not only the linear motives of the rest of the piece, but also at times the harmony, in its intervallic content and in the progression of 'pivot-notes' or pitch emphases. All of these issues will be discussed in more detail below.

Although Mystère de l'instant, as indicated above, does not unravel a motivic network comparable to that of L'arbre, it shares much of what constitutes its harmonic language, textures, and (where appropriate) motivic gestures with Dutilleux's previous music. As in earlier works where texture is foremost in the music's characterisation, such as the second movement of Métaboles, or the first and third parts of the first movement of Timbres, the harmonic language is especially dominated by clusters, which range from fully chromatic chords to sonorities comprising a diatonic or other modal arrangement of major and minor seconds. In more widely spaced sonorities fourth-chords are still the most common basis for the harmony. Unlike L'arbre, which frequently

has a bass-line clearly separated from the rest of the texture and clarified by octave doubling, in Mystère independent bass-lines are less common, the bass more often being contiguous with the prevailing harmony of which it forms the lower boundary, without octave doubling. This can be seen as another consequence of the orientation of the writing in Mystère towards textural rather than motivic or linear characterisation; it also suits the relative lack of bass instruments in the orchestra for which Mystère is scored (only four cellos and two double basses against fourteen violins).

Symmetry plays an important role in Mystère, but rather than being combined unobtrusively with the lyrical flow of non-symmetrical motives and harmonies as in L'arbre, it is set into stark relief: in the fourth movement (from fig. 18), two lines explore the extreme upper and lower limits of the pitch spectrum which is left empty, very much as in Miroir d'espace from Ainsi la nuit. The title of this movement in Mystère, Espaces lointains, indicates perhaps the most general and overriding difference in character between the two works, from which their emphasis on different technical characteristics arises. The exploitation of textural extremes - of chromatic density, or of separation and emptiness, and of unusual timbres - seems to be associated by Dutilleux with

images of space, of planets and the night sky: images incompatible with the scale of human experience and devoid of human intention or emotion. These are the images alluded to by the movement titles of Ainsi la nuit, by the subtitle La nuit étoilée of Timbres, with its reference to Van Gogh's painting, and by the movement titles of Mystère. L'arbre des songes, on the other hand, seems to follow in a parallel but complementary line of Dutilleux's works conceived as an exploration of human consciousness, and dealing in memories, emotions, associations. It is noticeable that these works are characterised musically by a greater lyricism, a more pervasive and developmental use of motives, and frequently a 'warmer' or less austere repertoire of harmonies and timbres, such as diatonic or modal passages and more opportunities for the instruments to play unconstrained by mutes, harmonics, extremes of register, etc. Earlier works in this line are Tout un monde lointain and, less explicitly, the second symphony Le double. Of course, these two strands in Dutilleux's music are never completely divorced, but in these two late works they come into separate focus more clearly than ever before.

Violin concerto - L'arbre des songes

As Mari has observed, Dutilleux's remark apropos of his cello concerto, 'the cello's natural role is to sing',

could be applied even more aptly to the violin soloist in L'arbre.² It is perhaps his most lyrical work, and although the solo line frequently includes the most brilliant arabesques as well as multiple stops and harmonics, they are always conceived as an elaboration to a cantabile line. The strongest contrast to the lyricism of the solo part is found in a recurring figure played on high tuned percussion, which most commentators have referred to as a 'carillon', punctuating the typically fluid and continuous textures of the work with its bright and percussive sounds, usually preceded and followed by silence. Although it forms an obvious gesture of articulation as it recurs throughout the work, the points at which it appears do not delineate the work's four movements or three interludes in any consistent or obvious fashion; indeed, the clarity of these gestures only underlines the difficulty of defining the forms which they articulate.

The analysis by Humbert is understandably tentative, since it was written before the work had been performed (Humbert 1985: 191-6). Mari's analysis is equally

2 'Le propre du violoncelle est de chanter', also paraphrased by Claude Rostand as 'La vocation du violoncelle est de chanter' (Humbert 1985: 115; see also Dutilleux 1993: 128).

restricted to describing a selection of events from each movement, as in a programme-note, with only a minimal discussion of the formal role such events might play in the piece as a whole (Mari 1988: 169-76), and Potter's comments on the piece do not include an analytical overview.

In his preface to the score Dutilleux emphasises the organic and lyrical qualities of the work 'whose ramifications multiply and are renewed constantly' and says that his choice of title 'was inspired by the idea of periodic return'.³ The four movements may reflect a quasi-symphonic scheme, and it is true that the third movement, Lent, shows the expressive and expansive attributes of a Romantic 'slow movement'. But elsewhere this parallel breaks down, and if the faster tempos of the second and fourth movements suggest the character of scherzo and finale respectively, in both movements the resemblance is undermined as they move away from the texture and rhythmic character of their openings and do

3 '[L]es ramifications se multiplient et se renouvellent constamment ... l'idée de retour périodique [a] inspiré mon choix de titre'. (Preface to L'arbre des songes). The translation given in the score (no translator acknowledged) includes the suggestive phrase 'the notion of a seasonal cycle inspired my choice of [title]' but the original French does not seem to support the reference to the seasons rather than periodic change in general.

not return. Furthermore, only the third of the three interludes sets the surrounding movements into relief, with its static harmony and lack of thematic incident marking it out as clearly subordinate. The size and complexity of the first and second interludes put them on a more equal footing with the first and second movements, while obscuring the boundaries where those movements begin and end.

In the following paragraphs I aim to identify the principal thematic and harmonic characteristics of each movement and the way that they contribute to its overall character and form. Because of the unusual relationship between the first two interludes and the second movement, these three sections are considered together.

First movement

The first movement alternates between a placid, introspective lyricism and a more capricious and agitated development of the opening ideas. It falls into two parts, similar in their overall outline though entirely recomposed at a more detailed level, and with the second much more concise (see Table 5.1). Both parts begin with an improvisatory violin figure based on the instrument's open G-string and an arpeggiation of perfect fourths

Table 5.1 *L'arbre des songes*, first movement: formal plan.

Section	fig.	Focal pitches	Brief description
A	(beginning)	g	<i>p</i> , improvisatory solo vln; x, y orch. sustained background sonorities
B	2	-	quaver pulse; woodwind phrases in fan-shaped harmony (mirror inversions)
	5	e'''	
C	7	c#''' / C#'	<i>più vivo, f.</i> piano: z
Cii	9	e'''	<i>ff</i> , climax. piano: carillon theme (c)
A'	10	g	<i>f</i> , x, y. <i>diminuendo</i>
	11	g	<i>p</i> , improvisatory solo vln; x'
B'	13	g#'''	a tempo; woodwind phrases in fan-shaped harmony
C'	15	g#''' / C#'	climax, although <i>p</i> . theme c
A''	16	g, a / C#'	improvisatory solo vln. then bass cl. focus shifts from g to a (at fig 17-1) and then bass cl. closes with quasi-cadential gesture onto C#

ascending from that pitch, which forms the first of the movement's referential harmonies: g-c'-f' (see b. 1-14 and fig. 11); this line is subsequently woven in with a 'fan-shaped' symmetrical idea in the woodwind (figs 2, 13). As each part progresses, the melodic lines proliferate and the harmonies expand and range more widely across the pitch spectrum. The apex of this expansion is articulated by a point of arrival and of harmonic clarification, with

the texture stripped down momentarily to a simple dyad formed by the firmly sustained bass-note C#' and a high violin note (c#" at fig. 7; g#" at fig. 15). Overall, the movement twice follows a winding path from the central fourth-chord, placidly outlined by the violin's opening line g-c'-f', to the more agitated and registrally far-flung texture of the C#'-based dyads. At the end of each part the violin returns to the g-based fourths of the opening, but the C# bass is retained, more emphatically at the end of the whole movement, where it forms the bass of the bass-clarinet solo which opens the ensuing interlude.

The opening phrase shows a strong resemblance to that of Tout un monde, where the soloist also muses over a phrase rising up from the instrument's lowest string, before returning to it in retrograde, over the same backdrop of a suspended cymbal roll.⁴ In the opening bars, from the beginning to fig. 2, there is a progressive development in the complexity of the background sound provided by the orchestra, beginning with the cymbal roll,

⁴ There is also a much more distant resemblance to the violin concerto by Alban Berg, with its symmetrical opening phrases rising and falling from the open G-string. At occasional moments later in the work the use of fifths rather than the opening fourths is used to create a 'G-minor' sonority extended upwards which is more directly reminiscent of Berg's concerto, e.g. fig. 16; see also the rising thirds at fig. 7 -2.

pitchless and without rhythmic articulation. The pentatonic chord in b. 5 introduces pitch and a simple kind of harmony, and brings the bass register into play. At fig. 1 the violins balance this by opening up the higher register, and introducing the dense, chromatic and layered harmonic language which will characterise the work (the chord in question consists of two pentatonic chords superimposed at the major seventh). Then, at fig. 2, a rhythmic pulse and melodic contour are introduced, together with the sound of the woodwinds. Although the orchestral writing becomes much more elaborate from this point onwards, it continues to function throughout almost all of the movement (and much of the rest of the concerto) as an amplification in terms of texture and harmony of the violin's line. Ex. 5.1 gives an example of the relationship between soloist and orchestra, which might be described as a kind of enriched heterophony.

Ex. 5.1 Heterophony between violin and orchestra

L'arbre des songes, i, fig. 3+1

The musical score for Ex. 5.1 is presented on three staves. The top staff is for the solo violin, marked with a treble clef and a dynamic of *(mf)*. It features a melodic line with several triplet markings. The middle staff is for the woodwind, marked with a treble clef and a dynamic of *p*. It features a more complex, layered melodic line with triplet markings. The bottom staff is for the woodwind, marked with a bass clef and a dynamic of *mf*. It features a melodic line with triplet markings. The score illustrates the relationship between the soloist and the orchestra, showing how the woodwind parts amplify the texture and harmony of the violin's line.



The solo line itself is a good example of 'croissance progressive', gradually developing more and more melodic and harmonic complexity from the opening phrase, which presents two cells of primary importance for the rest of the work: the pair of fourths (x), and the chromatic cluster formed by Ab (later G#), Bb, and A (y: see ex. 5.2i). After the same phrase has been given in retrograde, the first of these cells is developed from fig. 1, where the cycle of fourths is extended so as to produce the whole chromatic complement, but not in an obvious or mechanical way (see ex. 5.2ii). Each pair of notes is reversed, and the latter part of the cycle is given in retrograde order, and further obscured by the pause in mid-cycle at fig. 1 + 6. The contour is made more interesting and also kept within a more naturally melodic range by inverting some of the ascending fourths into

falling fifths: this gives rise to a compressed form of the opening fourth-chord shown in ex. 5.2iii. The second, chromatic cell is then taken up at fig. 2 -2, and the two cells recombined in the following phrases, as shown in ex. 5.2iv.

Ex. 5.2 Motivic cells

L'arbre des songes, i, opening

(i)

(ii) Motive x and the cycle of fifths

(iii) Fourth-chord harmonies derived from x

(iv) x and y developed and combined

The woodwind chords at fig. 2 (section B) consist of two layers of three-note chords which make an exact mirror-inversion of each other (apart from some parallel movement around fig. 3). They take up two characteristics of the fourth-cycle just explored by the soloist: one is the 'compressed' fourth-chord shown in ex. 5.2iii, which alternates with the simple fourth-chord to provide the two main chord-types as far as fig. 5, and the other is the potential of these fourths to generate the full chromatic complement. The woodwind phrases are organised systematically so as to generate complementary hexachords both in each layer (over four chords) and between layers (in every two chords). At fig. 4 this principle is further extended so that the top voice (and the lowest voice of the lower layer, which reflects it) generates a 12-note set within its own melodic line, as well as those within and between the two layers. Procedures such as these, sometimes inflected by the semitonal alteration of one of the voices, as at fig. 5, continue to characterise the music as far as the first climax at fig. 7, with a halfway point marked by the sudden leap of the soloist into an entirely new register with the sustained e^{'''} of fig. 5.

At fig. 7 (section C) the piano enters with a new figure, breaking up the smooth, quaver pulse of the music

since fig. 2 with a faster and more flexible rush of demisemiquavers (including a quintuplet). The effect of the figure is new, but it also derives from fourth chords, altered as at fig. 5, and again is designed to run through all twelve pitch-classes. It provides the melodic material for this more agitated section, acquiring on its second statement an extra twist in its contour through the addition of two extra pitches at the beginning of the phrase (from the third note it is an exact transposition of the piano's original phrase, see ex. 5.3) and subsequently appearing in inversion. The harmonies in this section also derive from the piano figure, by sustaining the last eight of its pitches, and then reversing the upper and lower tetrachords.

Ex. 5.3 Piano figuration at fig. 7

L'arbre des songes, i, figs 7-8

fig. 7

5

6

7

as at fig. 7

2 initial pitches added

fig. 8

(inversion)

Again, an ascent to the high e''' at fig. 9 marks a halfway point in the overall harmonic progression described by each section of the movement (section Cii). This time, unlike the nonchalant ease of the violin's leap

at fig. 5, it is a moment of climax more like that at fig. 7, with violin and orchestra rising together in a kind of heterophony. As at fig. 7, an apparently new figure introduced by the piano (here doubling the upper woodwind) proves on closer listening to be another offshoot of ideas already in play, combining the twisting contour of ex. 5.3 with the perfect fourths of x in a newly incisive rhythmic articulation. This figure is to become a striking feature of the work as the 'carillon' theme from fig. 17 onwards.

Here it initiates a tumbling descent down to g for a reprise of the opening theme (fig. 10; section A'), altered by trills, syncopations and a rich, contrapuntal harmonisation, but still clearly recognisable. The harmonisation begins with a bass-note C#, and this pitch-class features throughout all the rapid harmonic change of the three following bars, which converge on octave Gs at fig. 11. Thus, this phrase (figs 10-11) functions both as the rounding off of the first half of the movement and the opening of the second half. (The harmonisation of this passage also provides a good example of Dutilleux's preference for subtly hinting at ideas which will later become prominent: the last chord before the convergence onto octave Gs at fig. 11 introduces an F# major-based harmony, which will underpin substantial passages of the

third and fourth movements.)

The second part succinctly reworks the ideas of the first. After the opening theme has settled back onto the low g, a chain of overlapping major/minor chords (fig. 11) briefly introduces an octatonic collection which prolongs the pitch polarity between G and C#: the actual harmonic idea is developed from a passing violin figure at fig. 7 +3, and will provide the principal harmony for a more substantial octatonic section in the following interlude (from fig. 23). The rising arpeggio shape can be seen as extension of the initial rising fourths, and was introduced earlier at fig. 6 +1 and (in offbeat pizzicatos) at fig. 8. This is a much clearer exposition of the major/minor chord, which becomes the predominant harmony in a more substantial octatonic section in the following interlude (at fig. 23).

As at fig. 1, motive x extends into an exploration of the cycle of fourths, here enriched with sustained woodwind harmony and a bass-line derived from the same interval (fig. 12 -3). The entry of the woodwind's mirror chords and the violin's sudden ascent into high registers are here conflated into one event, at fig. 13 (section B'; c.f. figs 2 and 5). The piano's figuration from fig. 7 reappears at the highpoint of this second part of the

movement (fig. 15, section C'), again over a C#' bass, but scored quietly, with each note of the theme sustained so as to build up dense but shifting harmonies as at the beginning of Timbres, Espace, Mouvement. There is no equivalent of the piano theme from fig. 9 (perhaps to avoid pre-empting the carillon so soon before its first full appearance at fig. 17 +1), and the violin returns to the low g almost immediately (arriving at fig. 16). As before, the accompanying harmony moves through an F# major chord (fig. 16 +2), which now includes an upper c4', bringing it closer still to the F#-based harmonies of the third and fourth movements. The movement ends with the bass settling onto C#' and the melodic line on a, the latter pitch, continued in the bass clarinet cadenza which opens the ensuing Interlude, being part of a return to motive y which has been largely neglected in the second part of the movement.

Second movement, with Interludes 1 and 2

The long stretch of music between figs 17 and 48 is certainly not one seamless continuity, and it includes a number of more or less clearly articulated changes in texture, tempo and other factors which indicate a division into different sections. Whether, and how, such sections can be grouped together, and how they contribute to the formal scheme of the whole work, is more of an open

question: in what follows I suggest that this part of the concerto can be understood in terms of two quite different formal models. As in Ainsi la nuit, it makes a difference whether one starts from the titles and designation of different sections as marked in the score, not all of which are obviously paralleled in the musical narrative, or whether the analysis is confined initially to those aspects of the score which directly determine what sounds will be heard. So as to allow for the possibility of discerning alternative structures underlying the music, I shall take the second of these options.

Whereas the parenthèses of Ainsi la nuit were generally indistinguishable from the kinds of texture and continuity found in the main movements of that work, in L'arbre there are instances of more overtly transitional music: it may be useful to clarify and illustrate the distinction between these two different types of material. For the larger part of L'arbre, Dutilleux presents and/or develops distinctly characterised motivic and harmonic material within a relatively consistent tempo and metre, continuing to do so for longer than a brief reminiscence or isolated fragment: this is particularly true where the form is clearest, in the first and third movements. In a few passages of much more limited duration, however, we find music which does not have this kind of specific

motivic characterisation or consistency of development, but leads towards or away from passages of the first kind with broad, generalised gestures usually defined through changes of texture, register and dynamics. The most obvious example of this transitional kind of music is the third interlude, whose crescendo and gradual rise in register bridges the gap between the low, pianissimo close of the third movement and the loud, high timbres of the carillon immediately before the beginning of the fourth movement.

After the carillon (and the ensuing pause) marks the first clear break in the work, at fig. 17 +1, the bass clarinet resumes its cadenza and is quickly absorbed into the growing body of sound: this is the first instance of transitional music, in the form of a crescendo with a gradually rising textural mass in the strings underpinning a proliferation of woodwind filigree.⁵ At the climax of this passage, the carillon reappears (fig. 21 +2), before a substantial new section (A) begins at fig. 22 with new material in the solo violin (though still emphasising G and C#). This new material is explored at length, before there is a sudden switch to a new set of ideas in a

5 The woodwind arabesques here are strongly reminiscent of the decorative woodwind writing in Incantatoire from Métaboles.

contrasting metre and livelier tempo (B, at fig. 27), and these are developed in turn, before a gradual transition back to music (from fig. 34) whose metre, harmony, texture and character is similar (though at no point identical) to that of A. An increase in intensity leads directly into a return of the motives and metre of B (fig. 37). When this, too, is built up to a highpoint of intensity, more transitional music follows: firstly, a decrescendo with contrary movement in wind and strings which thins the texture down to a pianissimo figure sounding the cluster $bb'-a'-g\#'$ (figs 40 - 41 +2), and immediately after, a further 'transition' which expands this cluster and transfers it down an octave (at fig. 42 +2). Although the new tempo and the motivic fragments introduced by the solo violin at fig. 42 +5 suggest momentarily that the transition has reached its goal, these fragments in fact serve only to prolong the same spiccato texture and cluster harmony before it eventually dissolves into the higher register in a final transition or textural transformation. Once again the carillon is sounded, before a new slow section begins: this is the third movement and proves to be the most substantial and seamless development of material in the whole score.

Taken on the terms set out in this brief overview, the larger formal organisation of this music can be

understood in two different ways. If we observe the composer's division of the whole passage into an Interlude, the second movement Vif and a second Interlude,

Table 5.2 *L'arbre des songes*: alternative formal structures.

Fig.	Brief description	Three-movement scheme (as marked in score)	ABA'B' scheme (alternative interpretation)
17	bass cl. carillon bass cl. cont'd	<i>Interlude</i>	interlude
18	'transitional' music		
21 +2	carillon		
22	<i>Large</i> , 3/4 soloist; octatonic		A
27	<i>Vif</i> , 5/8; modal	2nd movement	B
29	beginning of large-scale bass progression (to fig. 37)		
31	texture becomes more sustained		preparing for return to:
33	3/4, <i>Vif</i> theme continues		
34	texture as at fig. 22		A'
37	5/8, climactic arrival on B; <i>Vif</i> theme	<i>Interlude 2</i>	B'
40	'transitional' music i		interlude
41 +2	'transitional' music ii		
42 +2	prolongation of transition ii (though initially seems to introduce new material, but then:)		
45	texture and motive dissolved		
47	carillon		

these three 'movements' can each be seen to fall into two distinct and roughly equal halves, as shown in Table 5.2 above, although the tenuous relationship between the two parts makes the identity of each movement somewhat arbitrary. Alternatively, a large ABA'B' form can be discerned, spanning figs 22-40, separated from the first and third movements by transitional material and appearances of the carillon. This shows parallels to the form of the first movement, and also accords better with the prevailing formal principle of 'periodic return'.

The transition between figs 18 and 21 +2 effects a harmonic transformation as well as the textural one described above. Following on from the end of the first movement, C# continues (up to fig. 19) to act as the bass-note for the melodic figures (in bass-clarinet and piano), and also provides the starting-point for the rising background texture introduced in the strings at fig. 18 +2. As the texture expands, the bass begins to move down in thirds, arriving on C \flat at fig. 21 +1. Meanwhile the upper strings rise, through a free use of parallel seconds, fourth-chords, and a series of whole-tone chords at fig. 21, arriving on a fortissimo dyad C#-D#, before the carillon reenters, transposed so as to begin with these same pitches (c#" , eb''). The change in harmony effected by the transition section is summarised in ex.

5.4.

Ex. 5.4 Harmonic transition, figs 17-22

L'arbre des songes

fig. 17 fig. 19 fig. 20 fig. 21 fig. 21+3

Upper parts rising: parallel seconds

Bass-line descending in thirds

fourth chords whole-tone

At fig. 22 the strong and thematic entrance of the soloist, the new, broad tempo and harmonic focus all provide the terms which the music then consistently develops for the following 27 bars (section A in the ABA'B' scheme shown in Table 5.2 above). Over sustained harmonies punctuated by sweeping gestures from the orchestra, the solo violin dominates, with double-stopped chords ranging across all four strings in an intense and declamatory *sostenuto* (a kind of writing first explored by Dutilleux at the opening of *Houles* from *Tout un monde*: both passages are marked *large*).

The music is consistently octatonic in derivation, and both the background chords and the solo part relate back to the major/minor harmony (with the major component above the minor, as in ex. 5.5 below) introduced at fig. 11 in the first movement. Most of the chord changes throughout

this passage are alterations in sonority and texture rather than in harmony: the same pitches are kept in play in the solo part even when they are not sustained in the orchestra. There is one significant change of harmony, however, at fig. 24 -1, where the bass note shifts up by a perfect fourth, taking it onto F \sharp , a pitch from outside the prevailing octatonic collection. (Rising perfect fourths increasingly characterise bass motions later in the work, following the pattern of the violin's opening motive x.) At fig. 25 the relationship between solo and orchestra begins to change *and* the orchestral shifts of harmony are given a thematic character, as the bass figure w is adapted as the melody in the first trumpet: now the violin's figures act more as a commentary on the orchestra's phrases (see ex. 5.6). At the same time, non-octatonic pitches begin to appear, through the use of brief diatonic clusters and perfect fourth-chords in the middle of the brass phrases, and also in the sustained final chord of each brass phrase. Here the lowest pitch B is non-octatonic, and forms a whole-tone set with the low F and adjacent pitches from its (otherwise octatonic) chord: the whole-tone set from which motive w derives.

Ex. 5.5 Major-minor
harmony, fig. 23Ex. 5.6 Motive w
octatonic and whole-tone interaction

fig. 25 octatonic chord

*L'arbre des songes*

Returning to pure octatonic writing from fig. 26, the contour of the brass phrase w' is freely inverted and extended into a long descent for both violin and orchestra, a descent which suddenly changes from sensuous sustained harmonies to a brusque staccato figure on the piano (*vif*) leading directly into the second movement (B). A new metre is introduced, a lively 5/8 characterised by triplet semiquavers in the upper parts over a bare, rhythmic bass-line in piano and timpani. This material is drawn from a new pitch collection (shown in ex. 5.7i), which overlaps with the octatonic set of the preceding section.

Ex. 5.7(i) Pitch collections, figs 22-29

octatonic collection, figs 22-26

L'arbre des songes, ii

altered collection i, fig. 27ff

altered collection ii, fig. 29ff

(ii) Superimposed triads and chord z,
(drawn from altered collection ii)



Here the soloist and orchestra take up a rather traditional relationship, with the soloist's melody echoed in a woodwind refrain at the end of each of the violin's phrases (figs 28, 29 -2). At fig. 29 F# is added to the collection, and the bass moves from C# and E to a new set of pitches (ex. 5.3ii). The harmonies drawn from this collection are much more varied than in the preceding section, and include a number of six-note chords comprising superimposed triads of the kind Dutilleux first explored in the *Choral, cadence et fugato* for trombone more than thirty years earlier (see ex. 1.5 on p. 37 above). The harmony of fig. 29 prepares for the reiterated chord z which appears at the culmination of this passage, at fig. 30, and which will return to play an important role in the third movement, as well as the fourth, where it ends the whole work.

The A bass-note introduced at fig. 29 and reinforced at fig. 30 marks the beginning of a long bass progression

which spans from here to the end of the movement, moving in the ascending fourths of motive x. Its passage through D (fig. 31), G (fig. 33), C (fig. 34 -1), F (fig. 34 +1), B \flat (fig. 35), E \flat (fig. 36), A \flat , C \sharp , F \sharp (instead of F \sharp) to arrive finally on B \flat at fig. 37 is outlined in ex. 5.8.

5.8 Bass motion, figs 29-37

L'arbre des songes, ii

At each change of bass-note there is some new development in the texture which gradually takes the movement further away from the material with which it began, and closer to that of figs 22-7 (section A in Table 5.2). At fig. 31 a lyrical countermelody is introduced in cellos and bassoons and the opening 5/8 metre is abandoned; at fig. 33 a broader underlying crotchet pulse is introduced (in 3/4 time) and the sustained chords introduced as high harmonics at fig. 31 move into the centre of the texture, where they provide the principal harmonic focus of the passage.

At fig. 34 (A') the resemblance to the music of fig. 22ff (A) becomes overt as the violin takes up again the wide-ranging, declamatory, double-stopped writing

discussed above, while the orchestra reverts to sustained harmony, articulated as before by sudden rising crescendo figures (as in the beat before each of figs 34, 35, 36). There are also reminiscences to the harmony of the earlier passage, both because of the overlap between the modes employed and also because the bass progression at fig. 34 passes through C and then F. The changes of harmony (at figs 35, 36, 36 +3 and 36 +5) remain almost entirely octatonic in derivation, but are also arranged so as to avoid duplication of the same pitch-class at different octaves (including the bass-line), with the exception of b' which recurs, often with the lower octave b, as the top note of every chord from fig. 33 to the end of the movement. The whole passage is directed towards the climax at fig. 37 (Interlude 2) where the soloist, central harmonies and bass-line all converge onto fortissimo Bs (after a crescendo and an acceleration of rhythmic values). Even the melody here is a kind of apotheosis of the disjointed fragments with which the movement began (B').

In several respects, then, the opening of Interlude 2 serves as the climax and the conclusion of the second movement, in the form of an exuberant dance-like passage, with a deliberately primitive two-part texture of melody and ostinato bass. But as well as concluding the previous

movement, it leads on. While the bass ostinato remains firmly grounded on B, the melody spirals ever higher. At the same time, single sforzando notes in the brass mark out an accelerating series of rising fourths, until the ostinato rhythm stops abruptly at fig. 40 and the unanimous woodwind melody divides into a series of overlapping strands. The triplet semiquavers and the intervals from the mode at fig 27 (ex. 5.7) are now drawn into a broad textural gesture, in which the woodwind descent from high a''' to low Bb' (at fig. 41 +2) is balanced by a rising harmonic progression in the strings (the gesture is comparable to that in the first Interlude at fig. 18 +2). The passage effects a shift of harmonic focus, replacing B with a new bass-note Bb (see figs 41 +2, 42 +1, 42 +5, etc.) and building the harmony around a central cluster b♭'-a'-g#' (from motive y), transferred down by one octave at fig. 42 +2: in the section which follows, both orchestra and soloist keep these three pitches constantly in play, the orchestra extending the cluster downwards and the violin line pulled in the opposite direction with rising (and freely varied) reminiscences of fig. 27. The whole passage proves to be a means of diffusing the energy and the motivic clarity of ex.22, until even the rather restrictive possibilities of motive y explored by the soloist at fig. 42 +1 dissolves

(at fig. 46) in an ascending flurry disappearing into silence. This is a turning point in the work, as would be clear even without the carillon which then returns to punctuate the silence at fig. 47.

It is often a sign of a rewarding complexity of thought and structure that music such as this can sustain two or more different formal interpretations. In the present instance, however, my personal opinion is that this part of the concerto is not as well judged in structural terms as most of Dutilleux's music. The Vif section (B) seems to hint at a vigorous allegro movement which would serve well to balance the extensive and beautiful lyricism of the first and third movements, if it were built up into a larger structure, but as it stands it is too inconsequential, drifting off into other material before the rhythmic vitality which seems to be promised has been sufficiently established. The A-type material which occurs both before and after B is more strongly characterised, but as a result it overshadows B and weakens its effect in the overall form still further. Though short, the climactic B' is more striking, but as a climax and a triumphant transformation of the fragmentary ideas of section B it seems to arrive too soon. After the second transitional passage, the longer section (from fig. 42 +1 on) when the soloist appears to improvise over the

sustained cluster harmony represents an interesting and original way of enriching a passage which might more predictably have led to the carillon and/or the third movement straight away. But again, the ambiguity of this passage might have been more effective if the movement preceding the transition had been more substantial and fully developed. Lastly, the use of the carillon both before and after the transition at figs 18 - 21 +2 has the effect of isolating this passage, whose every aspect seems to be designed to lead on to what follows: as a result, the momentum of the work may be felt to flag at this point.

Third movement (Lent)

As discussed earlier, the third movement is much more clearly defined, both in terms of its boundaries within the continuity of the whole work, and in terms of its character, motivic and harmonic material. It is a long movement by comparison with the dimensions of the rest of the concerto, and is the longest stretch of uninterrupted, consistently lyrical reverie that Dutilleux has ever composed. Interestingly, despite the prevailing tone of lyricism, only a few bars of the solo part actually comprise a smooth cantabile line, and the opening theme (C) which recurs at several points later in the movement is a succession of exaggeratedly disjunct notes separated

by rests as well as by wide leaps. Many of the most lyrical lines are played by the oboe d'amore, reflecting and transforming the soloist's ideas in an atmosphere reminiscent of Regard from Tout un monde and of the lines from Baudelaire quoted at the head of that movement: "Lacs où mon âme tremble et se voit à l'envers" (Lakes where my soul trembles and sees its own reflection).

The movement unfolds in a single span, reworking the same basic melodic cells into continually new contours throughout, so that while it is possible to discern several different stages, articulated by shifts in pitch emphasis, either in the bass or the upper register, these stages do not group together into any simpler design (such as the two-part forms of the first and second movements). Motive y becomes ever more explicit in the melodic writing, and also begins to characterise the bass-line; some of the most prominent melodic figures are shown in ex. 5.9i. Pitch emphasis is evident throughout much of the movement, and moves between different registers where it is featured variously as a bass or upper pedal, or as the centre of a symmetrical focus. The emphasis remains on A from fig. 48 +3 (except for some passages without any particular pitch focus) until fig. 60 -1, where tutti octaves, forte, move it to C# in the strongest gesture of structural articulation in the movement; it then remains

on C# until the final phrases of the movement return it to A (figs 63-5). With the one major upheaval of pitch focus thus confined to roughly the final quarter, the changes between different registers and between different kinds of pedal point - bass, centric, etc. - play an important part in helping to create a sense of movement. A summary of the pitch focuses is given in ex. 5.9ii.

Ex. 5.9 (i) Themes in the third movement

Theme 1 *sim.*
p (G#, B \flat , A)
 Theme 2
 opening motives x and y
 in retrograde (c.f. ex. 5.2i)

Theme 3 3 3
 fig. 58 -2 Theme 4

As the pitch focus becomes more prominent in the later parts of the movement, the harmonies become more varied and subject to less individual emphasis and repetition: from fig. 58 -2 to the end of the movement the main motive is mostly harmonised with diatonic clusters, each chord employing a distinct and often strongly

contrasted scalic form, so that there is no question of any one diatonic collection prevailing. In the opening bars of the movement, however, the harmony is based on the alternation and rearrangement of two chords.

Apart from containing a concealed reference to motive y, which increasingly dominates the movement in linear, melodic form, both harmonies comprise the same two

(ii) Pitch focus and harmonic types: overview

Melodic pitch focus

fig. 48 fig. 50 fig. 51 fig. 52 fig. 53 fig. 55

Characteristic harmonies

chord z' ($F\sharp ma + D$) chord z'' ($F\sharp ma + D$) ($D + F\sharp$)

Bass pitch focus

fig. 56 fig. 58 fig. 59 fig. 60 fig. 61 fig. 63 fig. 64

diatonic collections (changing on each chord)

incl. fourth chords, major-minor chords, etc. (as in exx. 5.2, 5.5)

diatonic collections (changing on each chord)

towards unison: no harmony

diatonic collections (changing on each chord)

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system (figures 48-55) shows a melodic line with a pitch focus and a bass line with a pitch focus. The second system (figures 56-64) shows a melodic line with a pitch focus and a bass line with a pitch focus. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and chords, and is annotated with labels for specific harmonic types and diatonic collections.

components - the dyad D-A and the F# major triad - superimposed in different arrangements. Both chords have been discreetly introduced earlier in the work, and will come to play an important part towards the end of the fourth movement. The first is almost identical to chord 2, which was prominent in the tutti passage at fig. 30, and reappears in the final bars to end the work; the second is presented with various different inversions and spacings of the F# major triad in the lower parts, and forms the basis of the slow episode at fig. 81 immediately before the end of the last movement. But these chords, like the other reworkings of material drawn from elsewhere in the work, are convincingly assimilated into the very particular atmosphere created by the third movement, so that their relation to the rest of the work remains a concealed, subliminal phenomenon.

Interlude 3 and fourth movement

The third interlude is very much shorter and simpler than the others, although its apparently athematic textures, simulating the sonorous objets trouvés of an orchestra tuning up, are ingeniously contrived to continue motive y as it moves from the As of the woodwind to the Bbs of the brass and in particular the Bb'-A'-G#' of the trombone

(fig. 66 +2).⁶ The use of space-time notation provides a rare instance of indeterminacy in Dutilleux's music. The degree of indeterminacy is very limited, however, with the position of the 'unmeasured' notes indicated against a background grid measured in seconds, and the rhythmically free writing kept relatively sparse, so that despite the experimental look of the notation there is arguably less latitude for the performers than at certain moments in Ainsi la nuit (e.g. the ending of Nocturne).

When the interlude has reached a peak of intensity, both registral and dynamic, the carillon reenters, dying away to reveal a pianissimo tremolando harmony which provides the background to the soloist's declamatory entrance. The gestures as well as the actual material are strongly reminiscent of the soloist's earlier entry at fig. 22, but are now arranged so as to emphasise once again the pitches Bb, A and G#. This material is combined with a variant of the carillon theme (fig. 72), whose disjointed contour and short phrases of steady semiquavers

6 Caroline Potter does not identify the G#-A-Bb cell which runs throughout my analysis as motive y, and she relates the A and Bb emphases in this interlude with the pivot note A which runs throughout most of the third movement and the b♭' which appears in the accompaniment for two bars at fig. 50 (1997: 98-9). Personally I do not view this b-flat' as a pivot note, but as part of a cluster G#/A/Bb in which a' continues to act as a focal pitch.

in accented pizzicato return to a style of writing first used in Tout un monde (in the variations section of Enigme, and also at fig. 84 in Hymne; it is to reappear in Prismes in Mystère de l'instant). Much of the solo violin writing is developed from fig. 8 in the first movement.

In the fourth movement the reworking of material as well as gestures and styles of writing from earlier in the work is more explicit (as it is in the final movements of Métaboles and Tout un monde), and an energetic and passionate movement in a lively tempo is developed. Like the second movement, however, it turns away from the opening rhythmic and motivic ideas sooner than might have been expected, this time to reveal unexpectedly a beautiful and striking episode in slow lyrical vein (figs 81ff) which, as Roger Nichols has suggested (1991-2), acts⁷ as a quiet apotheosis for the whole work. As the sweetly sustained upper pedal c³ turns into a descending melody, the harmony swells and thickens in timbre, but remains fixed to a surprisingly overt F# major triadic basis (although the overall harmonic density undermines any tonal implications). When the violin solo has completed its descent, reminiscences of the work's opening ideas

⁷ Caroline Potter describes it as 'the final climax of the concerto' (1997: 132).

gradually regain the energy of the beginning of the movement, and after a last appearance of the carillon (fig. 88) surging scales and glissandi based on motive y drive the concerto to its fierce conclusion, while in the brass, F#-based chords give way to chord z, its D-major component reinforced at the end by an octave-doubling of the bass D' so that the work closes on another 'root-position' chord.

As with the second movement, the energetic ideas of this final movement lose momentum too soon, in my opinion, causing the apotheosis at fig. 81 to seem premature. Furthermore, the three relatively brief passages of rhythmic vitality provided by the beginnings of the second movement, second interlude and fourth movement are heavily outweighed by the more lyrical writing which dominates almost all of the rest of the work. Although L'arbre contains, in the first and third movements, together with the final 'apotheosis' at fig. 81, some of Dutilleux's finest and most mesmerising writing, taken as a whole it is for me slightly uneven in quality and not completely satisfying in its formal properties. In particular, the joining together of the main movements seems to me to represent a compromise between the use of interludes in two of Dutilleux's previous works, both of which were arguably more successful. Where the interludes were

indistinguishable from the 'main' movements, as in Ainsi la nuit, the movements themselves were short and numerous, so that the overall shape of the work did not fall into large blocks of slow or fast music: the whole form therefore remained essentially fluid and unpredictable. But where Dutilleux wished to build the work from a smaller number of larger and more clearly defined movements, as in Tout un monde, drawing on the generalised types of symphonic music such as lyrical slow movement, variations, and scherzo, he kept the interludes very short and obviously transitional in nature. Perhaps Dutilleux was right not to try to repeat the form of either of these earlier successes in L'arbre; nonetheless, his solution here can occasionally suggest a lack of direction, as at figs 41-7, with a resulting loss of momentum, a fault most uncharacteristic of its composer.

These reservations are not reflected in the general critical response to L'arbre, which remains enthusiastic (a rare exception is Jacques Lonchamp who has expressed reservations over the 'tuning up' effects in the third interlude (1985: 33)) and the work remains, undeniably, an important and very beautiful addition to Dutilleux's own oeuvre and also to the repertoire of contemporary violin concertos.

Mystère de l'instant

The original idea and the working title for this work was Instantanés - 'Snapshots'. In one of the most interesting responses to this work since its première in 1989, Roger Nichols suggests that the unusual structure, with its ten brief, snapshot-like movements, represents a bold new departure for the composer (Nichols 1991-2). After forty years of deliberately interweaving and reworking motivic and harmonic cells to create a 'Proustian density of interrelated thought' (Nichols 1991-2), Dutilleux seems to have put all this behind him and concentrated exclusively on trying to capture or recreate individual moments of perception regardless of what comes before or after. This view of the work is born out by a remark of the composer's:

Recently I tried something different - a different form - for Mystère de l'instant, in that I found myself reacting somewhat against my natural tendencies. The title itself demonstrates this, presenting such a contrast with everything to do with the notion of memory, which is a constant in most of my works. (8)

Nichols goes on to say that the resulting ten movements are not in fact totally unrelated, however, thanks to the

8 'Récemment, j'ai expérimenté autre chose, une autre forme, pour Mystère de l'instant, en ce sens que je me trouve un peu en réaction contre ma tendance naturelle. Le titre lui-même explique bien cela par contraste avec tout ce qui se réfère à la notion de mémoire, cette constante de la plupart de mes oeuvres.' Dutilleux 1993: 174.

memories and instincts which inform the composer's creative process, and that by having had 'the courage to let go, and to trust the workings of the unconscious mind,' Dutilleux has created a work richer in the variety of its ingredients, but no less compelling in its unity and coherence, than any of his more consciously studied scores (Nichols 1991-2. Caroline Potter takes a similar view: see Potter 1997: 20, 68-9).

Nichols is certainly right to stress the unusual form of the work and the differences it presents by comparison with, for example, the many movements and parenthèses of Ainsi la nuit, whose interrelatedness is much more obvious. And he is equally right to qualify this point by observing that, whatever the compositional approach which led to the writing of this work, it is not in fact totally without moments of reminiscence or instances of material common to different movements. With regard to the question of the new approach to form, it is worth considering Mystère in relation to the interest shown in some of Dutilleux's earlier works to extra-human, natural phenomena, to which he generally responds in terms of music conceived more as texture than as motive, as discussed on p. 337-8 above. Though what Dutilleux calls 'the notion of memory' is certainly a major factor in much of his music, it has not always been equally important in

every work. Métaboles was the first work to introduce the extensive exploration of different textures as an alternative to a memory-saturated motivic web. It is characteristic that those passages and movements where Dutilleux explores some aspect of texture in a particularly rigorous and thoroughgoing way tend to have only the most slender motivic characterisation, sometimes hardly any at all. This is the case with several of the movements of Mystère: thus, the lack of motivic connections in the piece does not reflect a prodigality of different motivic ideas, but rather the scarcity of them.

Such motivic characterisation as there is takes up ideas which have featured in several of his previous works, and which could be described in relation to his whole oeuvre as generic types, whether of theme or harmony. (This is true of several of the textural ideas as well.) The most noticeable and prevalent of these motives is the 'bell-theme' discussed in chapter 4, which is particularly prominent in movements I, III and X (figs 5, 10, 14 and 50) and also appears more briefly in no. VIII (fig. 34); another is the exploration of a widening range of pitches expanding chromatically outwards from a central point of symmetry (movement IV, fig 18).

There is also an instance of a particular harmony

which features as a referential sonority in Mystère and is already familiar from earlier works by Dutilleux, in addition to the many harmonies constructed according to principles characteristic of the composer's harmonic language, such as fourth-chords, diatonic clusters, and the superimposition of different harmonic layers. The one harmony specifically recalled from earlier in the work is a Db major triad overlaid with an A minor triad, pianissimo, with timpani picking out Ab and db in the bass (nos V-VII, figs 26-29; no. X, fig. 47): in the details of its texture as well as its harmonic components the chord has already featured at a similarly cadential moment in Regard from Tout un monde (fig. 38).

In terms of pitch emphasis Mystère does seem to follow an instinctive rather than a systematic scheme, as ex. 5.10 shows. Again, there are some interesting associations carried over from earlier works, such as C# used as a pedal in both extreme upper and lower registers simultaneously (as in the second symphony, and also Ainsi la nuit), while G# is restricted to the middle register (g#) and sustained under violin writing featuring the upper three open strings (as in L'arbre) and also decorated with trills (as in Timbres, first movement).

Ex. 5.10 Pitch focus and harmonic changes: overview

Mystère de l'instant

The musical score is divided into ten measures, each with specific annotations:

- I**: diatonic (white note), fig. 3, chromatic clusters, fourth-chords, fig. 5+3.
- II**: fig. 8, whole-tone hexachord, whole-tone complement, fig. 9.
- III**: fig. 14, C: diatonic over other triads (D, B), G diatonic.
- IV**: figs 19, 20, 2-line mirror symmetry: no harmony.
- V**: (no specific annotations).
- VI**: quasi-modal, top line: finals on e' and a.
- VII**: fig. 30+3, variety of harmonic types: whole-tone, fourth-chords, triads.
- VIII**: fig. 33, fig. 36, (chordal descent).
- IX**: fig. 44, climactic chord, 6-note collection (SACHER), quasi-modal, top line: finals on e' and a.
- X**: fig. 50, fig. 52.

But in this work pitch focus remains a less prominent aspect of the music's language than densely chromatic texture, and despite Dutilleux's long-standing distaste for programme music, many of the textures illustrate the titles of their respective movements in a surprisingly literal, pictorial way. The opening movement, Appels, was inspired by some haunting bird-calls the composer heard one summer's evening in the country, and which he admired especially for being 'marvellously unorganised' (Dutilleux 1993: 171-2). The way in which Dutilleux's own calls are organised is examined later in this chapter. Echos (no. II) is more oblique in its illustration, containing only a few echos of the most literal kind, but a larger number of echos in reverse (a quieter chord leading to a louder one) and echos which transform rather than merely repeating the first sonority. Espaces lointains (no. IV) is directly pictorial, repeating the basic textural idea of Miroir d'espace from Ainsi la nuit, but without the palindromes, and with the finely detailed inner parts of the earlier work replaced by octave tremolandos sul ponticello - perhaps one of Dutilleux's less interesting evocations of the mysterious. Litanies (no. V) is again a more literal representation of chanting than either of the movements with the same name from Ainsi la nuit, its unison melody confined to the central range of a human voice and adorned

with grace-notes suggestive of middle-Eastern vocalising, while the brief Choral (no. VI) evokes the cadences of sixteenth-century music (it is very similar to the Jannequin quotation in the second movement of Les citations, Dutilleux's next work). In terms of texture, this involves imitating the sound of viols by requiring the musicians to play sul ponticello, quasi senza vibrato, and très lointain.

Rumeurs ('Murmurings', no. VII) is again overtly descriptive, and through its pictorialism introduces the most boldly experimental writing of the whole score: although Dutilleux had made use of glissandi ever since the first symphony he had never created a whole passage or movement from such sounds. (A comparison between this movement and the first Interlude from L'arbre, which also includes massed string glissandi, is indicative of the general difference in character between the two works: whereas in L'arbre the glissandi form a background to filigree woodwind writing which contains a lot of motivic detail, in Mystère the motives are stripped away and the background texture is made into the essence of the musical argument.) While the title Soliloques might be no more than a convenient label for solo passages for violin and cello in the double-stopped, declamatory style familiar from Dutilleux's two concertos, the

appearance of both soloists in this work is highly dramatic, as if conceived in terms of a theatrical context. The title Métamorphoses (no. IX) describes a musical process rather than evoking any specifically extra-musical images, but it does exemplify how the work as a whole is a kind of compendium of Dutilleux's most characteristic ideas, the title being synonymous with Métaboles and the material (the musical version of the letters of Paul Sacher's surname) taking Dutilleux back to the Trois strophes sur le nom de Sacher of 1976-82. Finally, Embrasement ('Blazing' or 'bursting into flames') offers a new and more direct approach to the subject of Flamboyant from Métaboles.

Only two of these ten movements offer extensive and detailed development of motivic lines - nos III and IX - and it is interesting that in so doing they also adopt a particular texture, whose rhythmic inflexibility and non-lyrical articulation (frequently pizzicato) Dutilleux has increasingly associated with the generation of musical material according to rigorous procedures distinct from the unconscious workings of memory (see the 'serial' Obsessionnel from Métaboles, Enigme from Tout un monde as well as parts of Ainsi la nuit and the fourth movement of L'arbre). These are the only two movements where the underlying pulse is immediately obvious, and, together

with the final Embracement, they are the only rhythmically energetic movements in the work. But they are not over-balanced in the form of the whole work, perhaps because the other sections are so deliberately contrasted with each other in texture and also in pace, so that no one mood prevails for very long. Whether it was through trusting to his unconscious or through more deliberate if unconventional planning, Dutilleux succeeds in creating a compelling dynamic which sustains the interest and momentum from beginning to end.

While the varying materials employed in each movement means that no one movement is fully representative of all the others, nonetheless it is possible to see within a single movement examples of the way in which Dutilleux approaches the basic elements of his musical language, such as harmony, texture and motive, and how they contribute to the form and character of the whole. In the remainder of this chapter I shall examine the first movement, Appels.

I: Appels

The movement progresses from the eery and tentative 'calls' of the opening, fragile in sonority and high in register, to the forceful and almost triumphant affirmations of the whole ensemble at the end, calling

the full registral range into play and bringing together all the many layers of Dutilleux's much-divided string orchestra onto a simple dyad C#-D# (c.f. fig. 21 +1 in the first Interlude from L'arbre). It also traces the emergence of an increasingly sustained and passionate melodic line - one which, when it achieves its fullest expression at fig. 5, proves to be a variant on the 'bell-theme' identified in earlier works, with its whole-tone intervals and narrow compass.

The opening bars contrast two short figures, or 'calls', both of which describe very simply a rising tone, the first in chords of harmonics, the second a more insistent and extended figure written as a single line (as opposed to chords) and based on the C#-D# dyad on which the harmonies of the movement will eventually converge. At this stage, however, these two pitches are quite distinct from the pitch-content of the chords, which are gapped clusters drawn from a diatonic collection based entirely on 'white' notes (E phrygian) and sustaining the lowest pitch e'''. In the ensuing progression, these chords acquire more pitches and are extended downwards. The downwards extension of the chords maintains the same tone-colour (of quiet harmonics) and the same rhythm, so that the chords are homophonic (i.e. there is no rhythmic distinction between the upper voices and the added lower

voices). But in terms of harmonic construction, these chords divide into two layers, the lower layer contrasting with the closely spaced 'white-note' pitches of the upper layer in that it consists of more widely spaced fourth-chords drawn largely from the 'black' notes. The contrast between the relative dissonance of the upper layer (which frequently exploits the two semitones of the diatonic collection) and the more consonant lower layer is also apparent in the steps between one chord and the next: in the lower layer these steps follow a pentatonic pattern, while semitones are frequent in the upper layer (see ex. 5.11).

Ex. 5.11 Contrasting harmonic layers

Mystère de l'instant i,
beginning - fig. 2

ascending-tone 'call', harmonised

white-notes, closely-spaced chords

step movement includes semitones

etc.

(x = semitones)

black-notes

fourth-chords

ascending-tone 'call' unharmonised

transposition by pentatonic steps (no semitones)

As the lower layer becomes progressively more independent, the upper chords and the unharmonised melodic line gradually amalgamate, until they share pitch content (a combination of $c\sharp'''$, $d\sharp'''$ and the 'white' notes $e'''-c''$), and at fig. 2 the upper chord layer is replaced by a

more complex texture in which the melodic line alone creates the upper part of the harmony through a heterophony of overlapping statements. Throughout the first half of this movement the general tendency of the upper parts (i.e. the melodic line, the upper-layer chords and their subsequent amalgamation) is to climb upwards, away from the lowest pitch $c\#''''$, while the lower layers expand downwards in a wide-ranging and powerful movement towards the low $C\#$, established in a quasi-cadential gesture at fig. 3.

This gesture marks a strong halfway division in the movement and the first emphatic assertion of a single pitch, but this is achieved by the lower layers of the texture alone, while the upper layers have fallen silent. The second half of the movement proceeds to bring the upper layers of the texture back into line, harmonically, with the $C\#$ focus, reaching the $C\#$, $D\#$ dyads at the end of the movement with the full orchestra now participating. This progression is characterised by highly chromatic descending movement in the upper chords, from which the non-chordal melodic line then re-emerges as a separate strand, clearly opposed in its rising motion and the simple diatonicism of its 'bell-theme' contour.

The movement exemplifies various characteristics of the work as a whole: the creation of different textural

bands or layers, and the merging or separation of these layers so that the overall layout of the whole sonority is transformed as the piece progresses, the restricted and reiterative nature of the melodic and motivic cells involved, and the tendency for large and complex chords to converge onto strikingly simple unison or octave sonorities. All these elements are brought together in a movement of miniature dimensions, composed from a minimum of gestures of the most concentrated and concise kind. The fact that the continuity of the whole work is assembled from very short pieces - snapshots - is perhaps the aspect of the work which is most unusual with respect to Dutilleux's previous oeuvre: even in Ainsi la nuit most of the movements are more internally varied and extensively developed than those in Mystère. But because the ten miniature movements are dovetailed together so as to produce an overall continuity, with the final pitch or harmony of one movement always forming the starting point for the next, the whole span of Mystère de l'instant still pursues the same 'symphonic' goal discussed by the composer in his essay 'Qui reste fidèle à la musique symphonique?' (see chapter 2 above). While it is true to say that the work is unusually spare in its relative lack of motivic interconnections, and that the ten brief movements pack a great variety of different textures and

ideas into the work's seventeen minutes, the work's basis in 'snapshots' is not as radical a contradiction of Dutilleux's previous aesthetic as this word may imply. The different 'instants' are never juxtaposed abruptly, so that the work is not a collage and neither portrays conflict between its constituent elements nor posits a kind of post-modern coexistence for them; instead, the gaps between the different ideas are always bridged. In the end, Mystère still creates the 'flot sonore' characteristic of all of its composer's large-scale works.

Conclusion

The two works examined in this chapter can be seen as a summary and a consolidation of two different aspects of Dutilleux's later style. L'arbre des songes is one of the most thoroughly developmental of Dutilleux's works, its various themes and movements related in many different ways through the continual transformation of motivic and harmonic ideas. 'The notion of memory', as Dutilleux likes to refer to this kind of compositional technique, is paramount; another metaphor for the work's aims is the organic image suggested by its title. Mystère de l'instant also draws extensively on Dutilleux's earlier experience, not only in general compositional techniques, as might be expected at this stage in his career, but also

in small but precise instances of harmony, motive, texture and gesture. However, the aspects of Dutilleux's work on which it draws are to a large extent different, and complementary, to those which characterised L'arbre. There is only a minimal correspondence between motives in the different movements of Mystère, and the idea of an organic whole is clearly less important in this work, whose form comprises a succession of separate 'snapshots', as the composer himself has indicated. Instead, Mystère sums up the composer's preoccupation, especially evident in the works from Métaboles on, with creating extremes of textural characterisation, often through the systematic control of aspects of harmony, register and the use of the orchestral 'soundspace'. Where Dutilleux has admitted to images which may be used as metaphors for this kind of music, as in his choice of titles and subtitles, they are, in contrast to L'arbre, mostly inorganic images drawn especially from outer space and the night sky. In such passages, textural experimentation has always been accompanied by a reduction in motivic characterisation and motivic development, and this is the case in Mystère, where motives are only of the simplest and most generally characterised kinds, again drawing on types already established in Dutilleux's earlier work.

Both of these tendencies, which may be termed organic

and inorganic, or motivic and textural, are already characteristic of Dutilleux's mature style; to this extent both works can be said to be consolidating established techniques. But in previous works these different tendencies have always coexisted within the same piece, and often within the same movement. Perhaps the single most distinctive change in Dutilleux's composition in the 1980s is the way that he appears to be viewing the elements of his musical language analytically, separating them out and concentrating on each of them individually. Because they offer an analytical and interpretative response to his previous works, and because they exemplify so clearly the different characteristics which have made up his musical language from Métaboles on, the two compositions discussed in this chapter make a satisfying point at which to conclude this survey of Dutilleux's music, and correspond very well to the stereotypical notion of late works in which a composer sums up and concentrates the essence of his personal development. However, with the premiere of a new orchestral work (written for forces unprecedented in Dutilleux's oeuvre) only a few months away at the time of writing,⁹ to say nothing of future plans, it may be that

⁹ The new work, still untitled but due to be premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra who commissioned it, includes a part for three children's voices (see Potter 1997: 179).

Dutilleux intends to make any valedictory interpretation of these pieces quite inappropriate.

Conclusion.

Dutilleux has always been a painstaking composer, and ever since giving up the hurried and often routine work of writing incidental music for plays and films, in the mid 1950s, he has produced only two major works every ten years, plus a handful of much smaller pieces. Despite this very slow, deliberate pace, however, his persistence over half a century of composing has gradually built up an oeuvre which forms a very substantial contribution to the post-war orchestral repertoire (just as Ainsi la nuit is an important addition to the modern quartet repertoire).

In this thesis I have aimed to trace the overall development of Dutilleux's musical language, by examining movements from a full and representative selection of his works over five decades. The chamber music examined in chapter 1 reveals Dutilleux's initial attachment to conventional forms, and particularly sonata form, but it also shows an increasingly rich range of post-tonal harmonic ideas handled with growing freedom and imagination. Dutilleux's first two fully characteristic and mature works are both symphonies, and in chapter 2 I discussed his awareness of the dangers of trying to perpetuate a dying genre, and his defence of what he felt

to be of continuing relevance and importance in the notion of 'symphonic' music. The two symphonies are magnificent justifications of his position, and show an ability to sustain a high level of invention over large spans, freely reinterpreting traditional models using focal pitches, referential harmonies, and motives which are continually developed and recombined. With these works Dutilleux is equally able to reject the sonata-form model of his earlier works altogether (as in the first symphony) or return to it once more (in the second) without any risk of producing the slightly academic predictability which can still be felt even in the latest and most forward-looking of the earlier works.

After the second symphony Dutilleux was to turn his back on sonata form and other traditional formal schemes. In the 1960s his music loses none of its brilliance, clarity and variety, but reveals a more calculated and disciplined construction in almost every aspect, from registral disposition, dynamics, the intervallic content of the harmonies and motivic ideas, to the overall arrangement of movements. This rigorous approach continues through the 1970s, but the music from these years, inspired by nocturnal themes, takes on a distinctly different character which partly derives from the introduction of clusters and a generally increased density in the harmonic writing. In

these works, alongside the lyrical and motivically developmental music characteristic of its composer since the 1950s and earlier, there are also passages where aspects of texture, such as timbre, dynamics, register and spacing, seem to take precedence over the development of motives, which is reduced to a minimum. In the 1980s these two different aspects of Dutilleux's musical language are disentangled from each other, each individually dominating one of the two major orchestral scores of these years, as discussed in chapter 5.

At different stages in his career Dutilleux's music may bear a passing resemblance to a variety of twentieth-century composers, both from earlier generations and from Dutilleux's own time: at first Ravel, then Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Bartók, later Berg, Lutosławski, Ohana, occasionally Messiaen. Such resemblances are mostly fleeting, however, and what is more striking is the extent to which Dutilleux's music carves its own distinct niche in the crowded and chaotic history of music since the Second World War. It is surely this quality of individuality, uninfluenced by fashions and manifestos, which makes Dutilleux's music so rewarding.

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List of Scores used in this Thesis

(The following list is confined to the music examined in this thesis. For a full catalogue of Dutilleux's works see Potter 1997: 210-23.)

Sarabande et cortège (1942), bn & pno. Paris: Leduc, 1942.

Sonatine (1943), fl & pno. Paris:

Au gré des ondes (1946), pno. Paris: Leduc, 1946.

Sonate (1947), ob & pno. Paris: Salabert, 19

Sonate (1948), pno. Paris: Durand, 1949.

Choral, cadence et fugato (1950), tbn & pno. Paris: Leduc, 1950.

Première Symphonie (1951), Paris: Durand, 19

Le loup (1953), Paris: Ricordi, 1954.

Deuxième Symphonie (1959), Paris: Heugel, 1962.

Métaboles (1964), Paris: Heugel, 1967.

Tout un monde lointain... (1970), Paris: Heugel 1974.

Ainsi la nuit (1976), Paris: Heugel 1980.

Timbres, espace, mouvement (1978), Paris, Heugel, 1980
(original version, without interlude).

L'arbre des songes (1985), Mainz: Schott, 1988.

Mystère de l'instant (1989), Paris: Leduc, 1994.